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The Ten Doctors

(A DETECTIVE STORY)

BY · ALLAN · ARNOLD · FOX ·

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THE TEN DOCTORS

A DETECTIVE STORY

By ALLAN ARNOLD FOX

PROLOGUE

ON the tenth of July, 20 years ago, at half-past eight o'clock in the morning, a man threw open the front window on the third story of the old building No. 73 Nassau street, in the city of New York, and cried three times in loud, piercing tones: "Murder!" Then he shut the window and disappeared within the room. Those who know Nassau street to-day and remember it twenty years ago, know it was the same narrow, overcrowded thoroughfare then as it is now.

Of the buildings many of the skyscrapers are taller now; but there are no more people crowded and wedged into its narrow limits than there were then.

And could such a cry pass unnoticed in a street like this? The shoemaker heard it, who was just opening his shop across the way. The tailor on the same side of the street heard it, as he was removing the linen covers and brushing the dust from his stock in trade. The man who kept the restaurant in the cellar on the corner heard it, as did every one else within hearing distance for a block away.

It takes less than the cry of "Murder" to draw a crowd in the streets of New York at any hour in the day.

With one common accord a swarm of people made a rush for the door of the building, No. 73. They crowded into the passage-way, they blocked up the stairs, they filled the building from top to bottom, a hurrying, pushing, gaping throng!

The old building was a most peculiar one—it has long since disappeared. It was but four stories in height—a mere dwarf alongside the gigantic office buildings of to-day—built of flat, Dutch brick, every one of them brought from Holland in the olden times. The narrow sashes, the

small panes, the ornamented lintels over windows and doors, the curious carvings on the cornice, all made it clear to the most inexperienced eye that this old house was a relic of by-gone times. The lower floor was occupied by shops, the ones immediately above were occupied as offices, while the rooms on the topmost story were rented out to such lodgers as chose to hire them. It was from one of the office rooms that the cry proceeded.

"Which office was it from?" cried the shoemaker, who headed the throng.

"From this one!" exclaimed one man.

"From that!" shouted another.

"Gentlemen," said an agitated voice before them, "a murder his been committed in here!"

The door of one of the front offices on the third story had been suddenly opened, and the man who called from the window stood before them. The name on the office door read:

"DOMINIQUE DE LA ROCHE."

The business was "Attorney and Counselor at Law."

Now the crowd that was pressing up the narrow stairs stopped to read neither the one nor the other; they rushed through the open door, headed by the shoemaker, and filled the office to overflowing.

The room was small and plainly furnished, and appeared from its fittings to be occupied half for office purposes, half as a dwelling. A desk, a book-case containing law books bound in the usual calf, a few chairs and a cheap table occupied one side of the room. On the other there stood a low, turn-up bedstead. It was here that the rush of the crowd was checked, and from this side of the room the stoutest-hearted among them drew back in horror.

Upon the bed lay the body of a man, with long, whitened locks—dead.

The features were disfigured beyond recognition, apparently from heavy blows with some blunt instrument, but the one glassy eye which remained untouched was fixed with the stony stare of death upon the body of a young man who lay prostrate by the side of the bed, upon the floor.

His face was broad and full, his hair was coal-black, and clustered gracefully about a high forehead; his half-open eyes, of the same color, bore indications that at times they might sparkle with fire and beam with the animation of youth.

It was not so now—now they were fixed and staring; a white foam oozed from his mouth. His right hand grasped a heavy oaken club, which bore every evidence of its work so lately performed; his left was tightly clenched, and seemed striving to clutch some object which did not appear. The man who had opened the door stood facing the crowd in silence. His countenance bore the hue of death.

He was fully ten years the senior of the young man on the floor, and of that ordinary cast of features which need no description.

The crowd gazed upon this spectacle with a general murmur of dismay. Few among them knew the deceased; and those who did, knew of him nothing further than that he was an old French lawyer of very eccentric habits. Known to be immensely wealthy, still he passed most of his time in this room, eating and sleeping in it as well. Friends he had none; his neighbors he did not know; his habits of life were a secret to all.

At this moment two policemen elbowed their way through the throng and entered the room. The crowd drew back.

"What's all this?" demanded the foremost of the pair, as the object upon the bed met his gaze.

"Murder!" cried a man in the crowd.

"Who made this discovery?"

"I had that misfortune," said the man who had appeared at the window, coming forward.

"And your name is——"

"Marius Burk."

"Business?"

"I am connected with the Medical College of the New York Hospital, on Broadway."

"In what capacity?"

"Demonstrator of anatomy."

"Please tell me all you know of this affair, will you, Mr. Burk?"

"Simply what you see. I called here a few moments ago to transact some business with the gentleman whose body lies on that bed, and found matters as you see them now."

"How long ago was this?"

"About ten minutes, I should say."

"And this young man—who has apparently committed this deed—who is he? Do you know him?"

"He is Dominique de la Roche, Jr., a medical student in the college in which I am employed, and a son of the murdered man."

"Do you know of any motive which might induce him to commit this crime?"

"I think I have answered questions enough!" replied the doctor doggedly. "I had the misfortune to discover this terrible affair, but I am not here to satisfy your curiosity—I will tell all I know, if questioned, before a police magistrate."

"You shall be given an opportunity to do so," said the police officer, grimly.

He leaned down and shook the prostrate youth, who was utterly unconscious.

"Call help!" he cried to his companion, "call help and clear the stairs, and we will get this man to the station."

The officer turned upon the crowd, and drove them before him like sheep in the midst of which there was a rush, a hurrying of feet up the stairs, and a young man, hatless and coatless, dashed suddenly into the room. He was breathless from haste; his eyes blazed with excitement and agitation.

"There, there, there," he cried, frantically, pointing his finger before him and striving to articulate.

"Who are you, man, and what do you want?" cried the policeman, turning upon him.

"There he stands! there——"

The man staggered and uttered a faint cry.

He pressed his hand to his head; a low, gurgling sound was heard in his throat; then, suddenly throwing both arms wildly about, he sank writhing to the floor. They tried in vain to restore him to consciousness. What had he tried to tell? It was all a mystery, and a mystery it remained.

They raised the youth from the floor and bore him to the station, while others did the same with the mysterious intruder and the man called Marius Burk followed with a policeman in the rear.

Officers cleared the stairways and the halls, and dispersed the crowd below. The fearful thing in the bed, with a policeman to guard it, occupied the office alone. Hour after hour passed; the people stood before the old house and stared up at its weather-stained front; but as the shades of evening fell they grew fewer and fewer, until at length Nassau street assumed its accustomed nightly stillness and repose.

CHAPTER ONE

THE ESCAPE FROM SING SING

At the close of the afternoon on the fifteenth of December, if one had been standing upon the little hill which overlooks the east wall of Sing Sing prison, he might easily have observed a man crossing the yard in the direction of the great foundry.

His frame was large and firmly knit, and his tight-fitting striped suit displayed the well-rounded proportions of his limbs to their full advantage. His hair was black, and his eyes of the same color; and, although bearing in them an expression of indescribable sadness, were yet bright and kindly. This man was known within the prison as "Doctor 94." Few, if any, save the prison authorities knew his true name.

And yet he had been with them for twenty years!

His fellow-prisoners thought him unsocial, and so he was. He cared nothing for the company of these men—nothing for their favor—nothing for their scorn. And yet he was always ready to help them—always ready to do any one among them a good turn.

He was particularly kind to the sick, and never lost an opportunity to help and comfort them so far as the prison rules would allow. The authorities discovered at an early date that he possessed a very considerable knowledge of medicine, and this secured him a position as assistant of the doctor's department, and he became known to his fellow-prisoners—from the number of his cell—as "Doctor 94." The closest questioning, the most intense exercise of curiosity could draw from this man nothing; and as those in authority came and went with the accustomed frequency of political appointments and removals in an institution of this class, what little had been known of him at first was gradually forgotten, and all that those about him knew of Doctor 94 was the bare fact that he had been sentenced for the crime of parricide.

On reaching the foundry he entered.

One of the workmen in this department had been injured by some carelessness—he had been badly burned, and Doctor 94 pressed his way through the crowd which gathered around the unfortunate convict.

"Here comes the doctor!" they cried. "Here comes Doctor 94! He'll be all right now!"

"What is it?" asked the man, as they respectfully made place for him.

"Jim Leary's burned, sir!" exclaimed a voice. "The pot upset, and the hot melted iron came all over him."

Doctor 94 stooped and examined the unfortunate convict with careful attention. Suddenly, placing his hand upon the head of the injured man, he looked quickly up, and exclaimed:

"Too late; boys, Jim Leary is dying!"

The men, with horrified countenances, pressed more closely around, the prison discipline for the moment being overlooked.

"He is gone!" said the doctor, solemnly, and he rose to his feet.

"My friends," he said, quietly, "our companion has escaped from Sing Sing at last—he has escaped, and no man has power to bring him back. May he rest in peace!"

There was an audible response of

"Amen, amen!"

Doctor 94 turned sadly away, and leaving the body of the unfortunate man to the care of those about him, made his report to the proper authorities. Darkness had already begun to fall when he had completed his work; and being to a certain extent a privileged character, he now went toward his cell. It was situated in the east wing of the great prison. Opening the door, the man entered.

The apartment was but little superior in its furnishing to the cell of the ordinary convict; still there were some slight evidences of the higher character of its occupant. Throwing himself upon the narrow cot, he stretched at full length, and lay, with face downward, hands clasped above his head, with an air of great fatigue.

"Poor Jim Leary!" he muttered. "His troubles are over! Would that I might join him, wherever he may be."

For some time he lay still. The last days of the setting sun had disappeared—the cell grew darker and darker. And still the prostrate figure upon the bed did not move. But after a while he sprang to his feet and paced the floor like a caged animal.

"Oh, this horrible restraint!" he murmured. "This horrible restraint! this fearful, dreadful feeling that day after day and night after night must ever be the same! Is there no way out? Is there, can there be no hope? My dear, dear father—my kind and loving parent! Can it be that these hands took your life?"

He had asked himself these questions a thousand times, and yet it was of no use, for it was evident that whatever crime had been committed by this unfortunate man had been committed during a period of unconsciousness. So much the worse! Better know one's self guilty than to live a life of doubt and uncertainty. He paced the floor up and down—up and down until the door of his cell was thrown open.

"A visitor for Doctor 94!"

The prisoner stopped short in his walk and quickly turned to face the speaker.

A turnkey ushered into the cell a man clad in a long black cloak, such as are sometimes worn by priests. He was clean-shaven, and was to all appearance one of that body. Hence his admission to the prison at that hour of the day.

"Peace be with you, my son!" he said, entering; then to the turnkey: "Leave me with him. I will call you when I wish to go."

The turnkey obeyed, and the priest and the prisoner were left alone.

For a moment neither uttered a word. They stood facing each other in the little cell, in the fast gathering darkness. The priest was the first to break the silence.

"You know me?" he said, questioningly.

"The sight of your face will ever be gall and bitterness to me, Marius Burk."

"No doubt; but I have the power to turn it to honey!"

"Why do you torment me? Can you not leave me to bear my fate in peace?"

"The same talk, the same bitterness," replied the intruder. "Will you never see the truth—never know that I am your best, and now your only friend?"

The prisoner turned quickly upon him.

"Understand me, once and for all!" he hissed, fiercely. "I shall never accede to your demand. You have tormented me often enough, coming here first in one disguise, and then in another, but you may keep on coming until the last day of my sentence—until my bones are carried from these walls—but you will never gain your desire."

"Tell me where that diamond lies hidden, and I will set you free."

"Set me free!—set me free!—and what then? Can you restore my youth? Can you return my dear father—my loving wife? Speak, man! You took from me all these things—you, by your cursed lying schemes!—can you give them back, and with them the twenty years I have spent between these walls?"

"You ask what is impossible—but if you regret all these things so, what a pity you did not consider before you killed your father!"

The assumed priest spoke sneeringly—the effect of his words was to deprive his hearer of all semblance of quietude.

"Damn you!" he cried, "so sure as there is a God in heaven, I believe that you, not I, murdered my father!"

"You were found with the bludgeon with which you killed him in your hand——"

"Who drove me to it—who maddened my soul with drink, dwelt on the little severity with which—heaven forgive me—I thought my father had treated me! I tell you, that day and its work are a blank to me; but I feel it—yes, I know it—that not even when crazy with rum—that destroyer of reason—could I have raised my hand against the author of my being!"

"Hush—hush!" whispered the visitor, lowering his voice. "Do not talk so loud, we may be overheard; and it was not to speak of the past, but the present, I came. For twenty years I have searched in vain for that great diamond which was known to have been in the possession of your father—where is it? You know—tell me, and I will obtain your pardon within thirty days, and make you comfortable for life!"

"If my life was to be as long as that of the patriarchs of old; if I knew that I was to live for a thousand years, and every day of it was to be passed within these walls, I would never tell you!"

"But the diamond can do you no good."

"It shall do you none."

"I will find your wife; I will restore her to your arms——"

"My wife is in heaven! God has delivered her from your evil plans."

The assumed priest stamped his foot in rage.

"You are an obstinate pig!" he cried; "the diamond cannot benefit you where it is. Let me have it, and I will set you free, I tell you."

"Man, leave me!" exclaimed Doctor 94, sternly; "leave me, and never let me see your face again! I never expect to be free, until freed by death!"

The man in the priest's garb made a leap forward, and seizing the prisoner unawares, felled him to the stone floor.

"Tell me where that diamond is!" he hissed. "Tell me, or I'll throttle you!"

There followed a short, but silent struggle, though neither made an unnecessary sound. But they fought like wild beasts, each striving for the mastery, for both were men of great physical strength.

It was over presently. Doctor 94 rose to his feet. The other lay before him motionless.

"Have I killed him?" breathed the prisoner as he stooped, and felt of his heart. "He is not dead," he muttered. "I have not added another crime to my soul."

He looked upon the prostrate form in silence, then suddenly he started back, and uttered a hushed exclamation:

"Is this an opportunity sent to me by heaven?"

He knew that he could escape. He and the man upon the floor were of the same size and general appearance. Stooping, he tore from the inanimate form the cloak and cap of the priest. Next he threw the cloak around his shoulders—it covered his body completely; he placed the cap on his head and stepped toward the door.

The man drew his cloak tightly about him, and opening the door, called the turnkey. He appeared and conducted the supposed priest through the corridors and down the stairs in silence. They reached the outermost gate, passed the guards unchallenged, and in another instant Doctor 94 stood outside the walls of Sing Sing prison for the first time in twenty years.

CHAPTER TWO

THE PANIC IN THE THEATER

ON the night of the fifteenth of December, there was a panic in a certain new York Theater. The cause was simple enough. An overwrought female screamed and fainted, and the fool-killer not being at that moment present, as he should have been, a stout man four or five rows behind yelled "Fire!" and a panic was the result.

Men, women and children were upon their feet in an instant—every one pushing and shoving and trampling all before them in frantic endeavors to get out. The orchestra played a lively air, violently the actors shouted and gesticulated; the manager, who appeared at the front of the stage, yelled himself hoarse, but all to no purpose. The cry once taken up, was re-echoed through the dress-circle and the galleries, in the parquette, in the boxes, among the gods above, it was all the same—every one intent on pushing their own way out!

Among those caught up and whirled along by the throng was a man of about forty and a black-haired youth of twenty. They had been seated in the dress-circle; and, more sensible than the rest, satisfied that the alarm was false, were endeavoring to stand their ground as the crowd pressed wildly by them.

"My heavens! look at that miserable beast, Simon!" cried the boy, suddenly. "If he isn't going to abandon that young lady and save himself!"

His companion, who was holding to a column in one of the aisles, looked in the direction indicated. A young man, whom he had before observed as the companion of a sprightly young brunette, with veiled face, who had been seated near them had, in an excess of fear, climbed upon the dress-circle railing, and seemed about to leap into the space below. One glance downward seemed sufficient, however, for turning back with a frightened yell, he dashed madly into the crowd which was pressing toward the stairway, leaving the girl to her fate. The youth of whom we have spoken was by her side in an instant, his companion following more slowly.

"Don't be afraid, miss," he cried; "there really is no danger!"

"But the fire?"

"It is only a false alarm which has driven these people mad. Stay with me. I will protect you in any case, even if your cowardly friend has gone."

"Rest assured, my dear young lady," said the elder man, quietly, "there is no danger while you remain still."

The girl covered her face with her hands.

"I am ashamed to think of that coward," she cried. Then, turning to the boy: "I'll trust myself in your hands."

The audience, wild with fright, rushed to the street, and then finding how utterly without cause had been their alarm, tried vainly to return. This the management refused to allow. Meanwhile, after the rush was all over, our two friends escorted the young lady quietly from the building.

"Please call my limousine," she said, at the same time giving the number.

The car was called, and the young man helped her in.

"A thousand thanks!" she said, sweetly; "your presence of mind perhaps saved me from being trampled to death."

"There was really no danger," replied the other.

Her cowardly escort had appeared, and pushing the boy rudely aside, tried to enter the car.

"I don't know you!" cried the girl, with flashing eyes.

"But, Pauline——"

His speech was cut short by the youth's companion; for without a word he grasped the man by the collar of his coat and flung him sprawling into the gutter.

"Lie there, you puppy!" he exclaimed.

The car-door was shut, and the chauffeur geared in and drove rapidly away.

It was snowing hard by this time. The man and the young fellow jumped in a taxi and were driven rapidly down-town.

The man was Simon Munhall; his occupation was that of a private detective; he was attached to the office of Rooney & Nolan, on lower Broadway. His companion was Charley Evringham, a clerk in a lawyer's office. The pair lived together in a Brooklyn boarding-house, whither they now were bound. They were, notwithstanding the disparity of their ages, fast friends. When they reached the corner of Fulton street and Broadway, they alighted and started to walk to the Fulton Ferry.

"Did you notice one strange thing about the girl, Charley?" asked Munhall.

"No; what was it?"

"She was the living image of yourself!"

"A fellow isn't supposed to know how he looks—I didn't notice anything of the sort."

"But I did, though—noticed it the instant I set eyes on her, although her veil was down. If it hadn't been that I knew you to be an orphan without relations, I should have been almost inclined to think——"

What Mr. Munhall, the private detective, might have been inclined to think, was left untold, for at that moment his companion, seizing him by the arm, suddenly brought him to a halt.

"Look at that man, Simon; what the deuce can be the matter with him?"

Munhall looked in the direction indicated—just ahead. A man was acting in a most peculiar manner. He appeared to be a priest—at least, he was clad in the peculiar long cloak and head-covering sometimes worn by those clergy. But it was no peculiarity of garb which attracted the attention of the detective and his companion. It was the man's actions.

He would walk forward rapidly a few steps, then suddenly stare at the buildings and stop. Suddenly he would walk on again, then as suddenly stop, and read sign after sign upon the different stores.

"What can be the matter with that priest?" said the detective.

They hastened their steps and drew near to the stranger. He was standing now at the corner of Fulton and William streets, looking up at the buildings again, this time at the block which stands upon the site of the old North Dutch Church.

"All gone! all changed!" he was muttering to himself as the pair drew near and listened. "Even the old church is no more! I feel as though I had dropped down from another world."

"Have you missed your way, sir?" said the detective, stepping up and addressing him.

The man started as though awakened from a dream. Then drawing his cloak more tightly around him, he said hurriedly:

"No, no. I know my way well enough, but it is many years since I have been in New York, and the changes which have taken place confuse me."

He turned as though he would leave them.

As he did so, his eyes fell upon the boy's face, and he started back, pressing his hand to his forehead.

"Young man, who are you?" he exclaimed, taking a step forward.

"My name is Charley Evringham," was the reply.

"Evringham! Evringham! The name is strange to me. I thought—— I did not know but—— Gentlemen, excuse me," he said, suddenly regaining his composure. "I am intruding myself upon your company; good-night," and turning abruptly off into William street, he hurried away without another word.

"What a strange man!" exclaimed Charley.

"Strange, indeed," replied the detective. "It would be interesting to know who he is, and what he has on his mind; that he is no priest, I would be willing to swear by his strange actions."

"What do you think he is, then?"

"I don't know, I'm sure, Charley, but we detectives see some strange people, and can imagine a great many things. Let him go; I'm not out for business to-night, and don't propose to bother my head about him."

So Mr. Munhall and his companion resumed their walk. They reached the ferry-house without further adventure, and after a wait of a few moments for the boat, they found themselves crossing the river to Brooklyn.

Notwithstanding the snow-storm, Simon Munhall and his companion took their station on the forward deck. A very unwise thing to do, even in the best of weather—especially unwise in a driving snow-storm, with the river filled with floating ice, running swiftly out to sea, hurried along by a strong ebb tide.

The boat had almost completed her trip across the river, and the passengers came out from the cabins and congregated at the bow.

On the Brooklyn shore lights began to gleam through the thickly-falling snow, and the rattling of the chains, as the bridgeman turned his wheel in the ferry-house, could be distinctly heard. Then the boat crunched through a great cake of ice larger than any of its fellows. There was a terrible shock. The boat gave a sudden lurch, and careened to one side. Everybody staggered, some grasping hold of those nearest to them to steady themselves. At that instant there arose a terrible cry, which struck terror to the hearts of all who heard it.

"Man overboard!"

"Charley! Charley!" cried a man amid the crowd at the bow. "Save him, some one!—save my friend! Oh, my heavens! Charley drowning, and I am powerless to help him!"

It was Detective Munhall who thus cried out. The form, for an instant dimly seen struggling in those icy waters, was that of Charley Evringham, who but a moment before had stood by his side so full of life and hope. He had been leaning far over the rail when the boat struck the cake of ice and the shock came.

Men crowded to the edge of the boat and gazed into the dark water. The deck-hands shouted, the pilot rang his bell to back the boat.

For Simon Munhall to leap in, unable as he was to swim a stroke, would have been simply suicidal; nevertheless, this is what the detective was about to do in the excitement of the moment. Stripping off his coat and throwing aside his hat, he prepared for the fatal spring, when he was suddenly seized from behind, and a voice said in his ear:

"Hold on, man! Why sacrifice a life which is doubtless useful? I will save your friend. Stand back!"

Simon Munhall looked at the speaker with hopeful astonishment. It was the strangely-acting priest whom they had conversed with on Fulton street, but a few moments before, and he rushed to the edge of the boat, throwing aside his long black cloak and peculiar hat.

For one instant he remained there, hesitating. In that instant he stood revealed in the dim light, amid the thickly-falling snow, a convict in State prison garb.

In another moment he was struggling amid the ice-cakes down in the black waters.

CHAPTER THREE

THE TEN DOCTORS

CHARLEY EVRINGHAM knew how to swim—and more than that, he knew how to swim well, and he tried to swim, but his overcoat and heavy boots greatly impeded his progress, and he could make but little headway. The floating cakes of ice also were an obstacle—a terrible hindrance. They cut his hands above, they bruised his legs below; to swim in such water, hampered as he was, seemed a simple impossibility.

"Some of these clothes must come off, or I'll drown," he thought.

He turned over upon his back and worked his arms out from his coat-sleeves. That was a feat of no small difficulty, but it was nothing to the drawing off of his shoes. But even this was accomplished, working off first one and then the other, with the aid of his feet alone.

And yet, strange to say, all this time the idea of calling for help had never once occurred to his mind.

The tide had now carried him quite a distance down the stream—he was above the Battery. Now was his only chance to make the shore at all, for in a few moments more he would be in the bay, and rescue then would be little short of a miracle. He struck out boldly for the New York shore with all his strength.

As he did so his left arm came in violent contact with a great cake of ice, and struck it with a fearful blow.

He felt that he had broken his arm. The useless member fell at his side; he felt a cold sensation settling around his heart. A great fear seized him, and his presence of mind so long maintained deserted him at last.

"Help! help!" he cried, each succeeding shout louder than the one before it.

The men on the canal boats heard it in their snug berths by the side of the South Ferry slip.

The bridgemen in the ferry-house heard it, and so did the solitary watchman in the barge office beyond, but no one responded—no one had even curiosity enough to seek to find whence the cry proceeded.

Then he felt himself seized from behind by a strong and powerful arm, and his sinking body supported from beneath, while a firm voice shouted in his ear:

"Courage, boy! Courage! Make one more effort for life, and I will help you!"

Charley could not see who held him—he did not even try. He only felt that the life which had almost ebbed away—was just leaving his grasp—might yet be his. He realized this, and yet he did the very worst thing which, under the circumstances, he could have done—turned suddenly and flung his arm around the neck of his rescuer and wound his legs tightly around his body.

"Save me! save me!" he cried, frantically.

The man who held him seemed prepared for this, for, with a mighty effort, he shook himself free, never once losing his hold upon the boy's waist.

"Keep clear of me," he shouted; "keep clear of me, or we shall both perish!"

This brought Charley to his senses.

"I will," he answered, feebly, "only my arm is broken. I can't help myself at all."

The man made no reply, but raised his head and looked about.

"Our only chance," he muttered. "We can never swim through this ice to the shore," and without another word he threw himself upon a great ice-cake which was drifting by, and with a mighty effort dragged the boy after him. For a few moments both lay there exhausted. Neither spoke a word. A faint moan from Charley broke the silence.

"Are you badly hurt?" asked his companion, kindly.

"My arm is broken."

"How did it happen? Let me see."

The man arose, and stooping over the youth, examined the wounded limb. As he did so, Charley looked up at him with intense surprise. He was dressed in convicts' garb.

"Who are you?" he cried, trying to rise.

"Your friend, I hope," replied the other, quietly. "Does my costume alarm you? Boy, know that, at a time like this, all men are brothers. Lie still; I cannot examine your arm so."

"But you are——"

"An escaped convict. Well, does it matter, if I save your life?"

"How came you here?"

"No matter," was the reply. "Lie still, I tell you; this is no time for questions. At any moment we may be both landed into eternity and summoned before a Judge more merciful and more righteous, I trust, than the one at whose sentence I was forced to don these garments. Will it matter, then, to you, who or what I am? Let me look at this arm again."

He examined it closely.

"It is not broken," he said, after a moment, "only dislocated. Can you bear a little pain?"

"I guess so," replied Charley.

"Then I will put it in place at once."

He seized the arm, and, by a dexterous pull restored it to its normal condition.

"There?" he exclaimed, in a tone of satisfaction, "that's better! Now be careful of it, and when we reach the shore I'll see to it again."

When they reached the shore!

Out into the bay they floated; dimmer and dimmer waxed the lights of the great city; deeper and deeper grew the darkness around them. They had lost all knowledge of the direction in which they were drifting—they only knew that the way in which they were going led out to sea.

Suddenly from beneath them was heard a grating sound. The cake of ice stopped, swung round and round, moved on again, grated once more, and then suddenly, without a moment's warning, broke into a dozen pieces beneath them, letting its precious freight of two human souls down into the icy waters. The man grasped his young charge firmly.

"We will die together!" he cried, as they were plunged into the chilling waters. "Heaven knows I tried to save you, but I can do no more."

But it was not at all necessary that either Charley Evringham or his unknown friend should die. It was purely a matter of choice. The water into which they had fallen was not over three feet deep. The ice-cake had grounded in the shallow. They had floated around to the meadows of the Jersey shore. The man uttered one shout of fierce joy.

"Saved!" he cried, "saved by a miracle! Our time has not come yet!"

Both were upon their feet in an instant, and were wading in.

"Where are we?" exclaimed Charlie, looking about.

"On the Jersey flats, to be sure," replied his companion. "I've hunted here many a time in the days gone by; but come, we shall freeze if we linger; let us seek for shelter."

They looked about, but save one feeble light at apparently no great distance, all was one dark, dreary waste.

"Let us make for that light," said the convict, and without another word he grasped the hand of the almost frozen boy and struck out boldly through the reeds, broken ice and shallow water toward the glimmering beacon. He

never gave his own condition one moment's thought, yet he knew the risk he ran. To enter the abode of man in the garb which he wore meant instant detection and detection a return to that prison—that dreadful existence from which he had just escaped.

Pushing boldly in toward the light, they were surprised as they drew near to observe how low down upon the marsh it lay.

Their curiosity did not remain long ungratified, for in a moment more they had reached the light, and found that it gleamed from the little cabin window of an old canal boat, anchored, or rather frozen, in a sluggish stream which set back in among the reeds. The convict approached, and bidding the boy remain where he was, climbed up its icy sides, and peered into the little window. He uttered an exclamation of surprise and joy. A sight met his gaze which filled his heart with hope. At a table in the little cabin sat two men playing at cards. In the faces of both he recognized men who had served terms in Sing Sing prison. They were ex-convicts! Creatures like himself!

"Come up here, boy!" he cried. "We are safe now! Here, give me your hand. So; there you are!" and he pulled Charley upon the deck beside him.

The noise had evidently attracted the attention of those within, for the cabin door was flung open, and a man rushed at them with a revolver in his hand.

"Who are you?" he shouted. "Stand where you are."

The convict turned quietly toward him.

"Bill Leary," he said, "would you kill an old friend?"

"An old friend? I have no friends."

"Yet Doctor 94 was, and still is, your friend."

"Doctor 94! And be the powers above, if it's the truth ye're spaking, doctor, what brought ye here?"

"Let me come inside, Bill, and bring this boy, and you shall hear all about it."

"Inside, is it?" cried the man, in a rich brogue. "And sure, doctor, if ye axed me for me lift ear, ye should have it! Come in—come in! Heaven love ye, ye're as welcome as a May mornin' to Bill Leary's best, though that ain't much jist now, and more's the pity?"

Without further parley the man seized Charley, who had sunk from sheer exhaustion to the deck, and raising him as tenderly as a baby, carried him into the cabin, followed by the convict, and the door was closed. They had reached a haven of rest. They had found warmth and shelter. As they entered the second man met them at the door, and was also greeted by the boy's preserver, and in turn hailed as a friend.

Into what strange company had they fallen?

Strange, indeed, for presently the little cabin was filled with rough men in various stages of dress and undress, as they had been aroused from their sleep by the noise on the deck above. They numbered nine all told, and as they entered they pressed around the stranger with exclamations of wonder.

Suddenly the Irishman, who had been addressed as Bill Leary, jumped upon the table.

"Byes," he shouted, "let there be order in the court while I spake."

He was interrupted by laughter and shouts.

"Order! order!" he cried. "Order now, byes, or I'll fine ye tin dollars, so I will."

"Fine away, Bill," they cried, laughing.

"Byes, an old friend has come among us—one that we all know and love.

"Now, byes," continued Leary, "ye all know the doctor, for where he's been, we've been, and the road he's traveled has been traveled by all of us; and what I want to say is jist this, and I know ye'll all agree with me: There ain't no better man as ever wore the zebra suit! I resign from this minute. Byes, Doctor 94 is boss of this gang. Heaven bless him for a man!"

Cries of "So he is!" and "Heaven bless him!" came from every mouth.

The man in convict's garb seemed deeply moved.

"My friends," he said, "if I consent to this change and agree to join you, will you swear to be true to me—to do my will, at all times and under all circumstances?"

"We will!" they shouted.

"Then I accept your allegiance," replied the man, "and thank you for your confidence. You will not find me ungrateful. Old friends, I have a great work to do in the world to which I have been so long a stranger—a great vengeance to execute. Will you help me?"

"We will!"

"Will you stand by me to the death?"

"We will!"

"Then from this moment you are to be known as the Ten Doctors!"

CHAPTER FOUR

THE SECRET HIDING-PLACE DISCLOSED

BEECHMONT MANOR was certainly one of the handsomest, as well as one of the most favorably situated of all the fine old residences which border on Long Island Sound.

It stood on a little knoll facing the water, and commanding a view for miles in either direction.

A broad avenue, lined with noble beech-trees—hence its name—led from the front of the mansion to the road leading to the town of New Rochelle—for Beechmont was not more than two miles from that borough—and save a little house which stood at its entrance, and which had formerly served as a porter's lodge, no other dwelling was near.

Beechmont was a noble place.

It had in former days been the property of a rich and eccentric old Frenchman, who twenty years before had been found murdered in his New York office. It was now the residence of his nephew, and, as was generally believed, sole heir—Dr. Marius Burk.

Rich—having become possessed of all his late uncle's wealth, no one knew exactly how; powerful—having exercised his profession before retiring from active work, as he had done some five years previous, among the wealthiest and most influential families in New York—Dr. Burk ought to have been a happy man. He was far from it.

It was not known that he had ever committed any act to call for remorse. His family consisted solely of one son—his wife had long been dead. As to business, he was supposed to have none, except such as was necessary to the proper care of his large estate. No; to the world Dr. Burk had everything which could or should have rendered life one constant enjoyment. Nevertheless, he was very miserable.

It was late in the evening of the sixth day following the events of the last chapter, and Dr. Burk sat alone in his library at Beechmont by the side of a dying fire, lost in thought. His surroundings were those of elegance and luxury. The room was elegantly furnished; the carpet was of the finest velvet; the chairs, sofas and tables of solid mahogany, richly covered and studded with brass nails. Heavy curtains shrouded the windows, which opened down to the floor upon a balcony without; long rows of shelves lined the room, filled with books of every description.

Without the wind moaned and howled, betokening a rising storm; within, save for the dying fire, all was brightness and comfort. And yet Dr. Burk seemed neither happy nor contented.

Now he would pace the floor up and down—up and down, muttering to himself, then suddenly changing his motion, fling himself into his great easy-chair, and leaning his head on his hand appear lost in thought. Thus hour after hour sped by, until the heavily-ornamented clock on the mantel tolled forth in cathedral chimes the hour of four.

The sound, however, seemed to arouse him, for he was in the musing fit then.

"Damn the luck!" he exclaimed, striking the table with his clenched fist. "Are my plans to miscarry at the eleventh hour?"

He sprang to his feet, and again paced the floor.

"Dominique de la Roche escaped from Sing Sing," he muttered, as he walked, "but from me he shall never escape, for I will hunt him and crush him. To think that after twenty years of absolute security I should be thus threatened—it is horrible! To-morrow shall see the end of it; to-morrow I will have every detective in New York upon his track.

"Oh, if I could only get that diamond!" he exclaimed, increasing his pace as he walked. "That gem of the French crown! If I could but lay my hands upon its glittering form, he might take the rest and enjoy it in peace!

"I know it is within the four walls of this house, for the old man once showed it to me in this very room. I have searched for that jewel, and for twenty years I have search in vain—if I could but feast my eyes upon its sparkling light again!"

"Marius Burk, your wish shall be granted," said a deep, sepulchral voice almost in his ear, "to-night your eyes shall once more behold the great diamond—the Bhrampoor of Kalaghaat, the gem of the French regal crown!"

Pale and trembling, the man faced suddenly around. There was no one to be seen. The room was, save for his own presence, deserted.

"Whose voice was that?" he cried, shaking with fear.

There was no reply. He rushed to the curtained window.

"Who spoke?" he cried again, at the same time pulling the curtains violently aside, for he was in no sense a coward. As he he did so a man of large, robust form emerged from behind them and strode past him into the room.

"I spoke, Marius Burk," he said, quietly, folding his arms and standing before him.

"Dom!"

"Yes—Dom."

"What do you want here?" cried the doctor, springing forward. "Do you know that at a word from me you would be instantly apprehended?"

"Yes, Marius; but you will never speak it."

"Why will I not?"

"First, because having wrecked my life you will never imperil your own by laying hands, or causing others to do so at your bidding, upon a desperate man."

The doctor ground his teeth, but made no reply.

"Secondly, Marius," continued the other, quietly, "because—I may as well tell you; the knowledge will cause you to have a care—there are at this precise instant nine loaded and cocked revolvers aimed at you, all of which are liable to explode if you make one hostile move!"

"For what did you come?" said the master of the house, with an air which testified to his complete understanding of the arguments advanced by his unwelcome visitor.

"Not for your worthless life, cousin!" replied the other. "I have other business here to-night; among other things to show you that diamond."

"Then it is in this house, as I always expected."

"It is in this room!"

"This room! And for twenty years I might have——"

"Laid your hand on it at any moment!"

The eyes of Dr. Burk glistened; he retreated slowly backward, maintaining a steady gaze upon his visitor as he did so. Suddenly he threw his hand behind him, and seized from a drawer in the table a revolver, and pointed it at the man before him.

"Then I'll find it for myself, Dominique de la Roche. I'll find it if I have to pull down this old house until there is not one stone left upon another. Stand back. Think not to alarm me with your childish tales of companions. You are an escaped convict, dead to the world for twenty years; who then can be your companions? This time I shall not trust you to prison walls."

The man's countenance was livid—his eyes glittered with demoniacal hatred. His visitor made neither motion nor sound. The doctor raised his pistol.

"So you would kill me, Marius?"

"As I would a dog!"

"Don't you think it would be well to learn my secret first?"

"I have learned enough; a hammer and a crowbar will tell me the rest."

"I'll save you the trouble!" cried the man, uttering a low whistle, and nine forms, heavily shrouded in black cloaks, their features hidden by masks of the same color, suddenly seemed to fill the room.

Dr. Burk dropped the revolver from his now nerveless hand.

"What would you do, Dom?" he cried, now thoroughly alarmed.

"Much, Marius Burk," replied the other, sternly. "Do you see these men? Every one of them has suffered what I have suffered, endured what I have endured; every one of them has been an inmate of that prison to which your infamy consigned me. They are desperate men, ready for desperate measures."

Dr. Burk dared not reply.

"You see," continued the other, "how completely you are in my power. One movement on your part to attack or summon help and you are a dead man!"

Dr. Burk showed no disposition to run any such risk.

"Now, Marius," continued the leader of the band, "for twenty years you have searched for this diamond—you have striven in every way in your power to make me tell you where it lay concealed. To-night your wish shall be granted. The diamond is at this moment within ten feet of where you stand."

A smothered curse escaped the lips of the physician. How many, many times had he searched for it from one end of the great house to the other! How many anxious hours had he passed seeking that hiding-place! And now to be told that it was close to him—in the very room in which he had lived! His rage was great—it was the rage of despair. Without another word the intruder strode to the fire-place, before which the doctor stood, and pressing upon the eye of a carved boar's head, which projected from the ornamental wood-work above, a panel flew back, disclosing a small square compartment.

"See!" he exclaimed, "the secret hiding-place for which you have so long and vainly sought—the repository of the Bhrampoor of Kalaghaat, the largest diamond in Europe, once the gem of the crown of Louis Philippe, the last of the Bourbon kings of France!"

The doctor only groaned; the nine shrouded figures stood like statues, and did not move or utter a sound. The in-

truder plunged his hand into the secret compartment. Once! Twice! Three times his hand entered, three times it was removed, and each time he withdrew it, it was loaded with glittering gems. Diamonds, rubies, emeralds and sapphires, of all sizes, shapes and kinds, some loose, and some in old and curious settings. He lighted the great brass lamp again, and piled them on the table around it, a glittering heap.

Again and again he plunged his hand into the secret compartment, and each time added to the dazzling pile. At last it was emptied. A look of chagrin and surprise overspread the countenance of the midnight visitor; evidently that which he most desired had not been found.

Hastily seizing the lamp from the table, he held it in such a manner as to throw the full glare of its light into the secret compartment. It was empty!

The prize of prizes was gone.

The great diamond, the Bhrampoor of Kalaghaat, had disappeared.

Dr. Burk watched these proceedings with intense interest, but made no motion to interfere, as the man replaced the lamp upon the table.

"Well," said the doctor, with an intonation of sarcasm, yet with disappointment, "the diamond—you were to show it—where is it?"

"Burk," he said, "the diamond is gone—where or how, I know not. My father alone could tell, for when I last saw it, it reposed in its velvet case within that panel. It has been removed—how, or by whom, we shall probably never know."

From the physician there came no reply.

"But," he continued, "I shall find it. It still exists in the place where my father last put it, which I have supposed to be behind that panel. I shall find it, Burk, but it will never gladden your eyes now—its glitter you shall never see! And these," he added, running his hand through the heap of dazzling gems before him, "these baubles—remnants of a kingly age, which my poor father treasured so carefully in the vain hope of restoring them to their rightful owners—with the price of these I will execute on you!"

The physician bowed his head—he still maintained his dogged silence. An instant later he looked around and was astonished to see the man and his comrades were gone.

But the casement was open, and the storm, which had now burst upon Beechmont Manor with its full fury, drove the drifting snow into the room. The doctor strode to the window and closed it.

"Be it so, cousin! It is man against man, now; there is still another day, and then—we shall see who will win!"

CHAPTER FIVE

BECOMING A DETECTIVE

SIMON MUNHALL sat alone in the private office of Rooney & Nolan's detective agency on Broadway engaged in the pleasant occupation of smoking a pipe. It is the morning of the 24th of December—three days later—and notwithstanding the agreeable nature of his employment, Munhall did not appear to be in particularly good humor. Quite the contrary.

A well-satisfied man does not smoke his pipe with short, jerky puffs. A contented man does not turn and twist himself in his chair. A calm-minded man does not alternately twiddle his fingers and drum with them on the desk.

Munhall was doing all these things at one and the same time, and it was therefore safe to assume that matters had not gone with him to his liking. He was anxious and troubled about Charley Evringham, his young friend. Where was he? What was he doing? These were two questions which greatly perplexed the detective.

He knew the lad was not dead, for the day following the terrible occurrence on the Fulton Ferry, after a night of anxiety and vain search, having resigned all hope that he could by any chance have been saved, he had received a letter from the boy stating that he was alive and among friends, but that he would probably not see him for several days, and requesting that he would so inform his employers.

This was what puzzled Simon Munhall.

There was an air of mystery surrounding the affair which excited the worthy detective's professional curiosity, and upon which the letter, post-marked as it was at the general office in New York, threw no ray of light.

Burning as he was with a desire to investigate this mysterious affair, both his employers must needs be suddenly called West on special business, and leave him in full charge of the office, to absent himself from which for more than a few minutes at a time was consequently impossible.

At this moment the office boy entered.

"Well, Ed, what is it?"

"A gentleman to see you, sir, or rather a boy. He says his name is Evringham."

Munhall dashed his half-filled pipe to the floor, kicked over a chair, and, thrusting the astonished Ed rudely to one side, rushed to the outer office.

"Talk of—angels!" he shouted, seizing a handsome youth, who stood without, by the hand and fairly embracing him.

"Charley, old boy, how are you? I'm so glad to see you alive and well that I can't find words to say half what I want to. Come in, lad, come in!"

And he fairly dragged him into the inner office.

There, for the first time, he noticed that the boy carried one arm in a sling.

"What's the matter—hurt your arm?" he exclaimed. "Come, old fellow, tell me all about it. Great Scott! how glad I am to see you here at all!" and he shook the boy's free hand again and again.

"Well, Mr. Munhall," replied Charley, as soon as he could find an opportunity to speak, "you see I did not drown after all."

"So I see; but where have you been?"

"That you must not ask me."

"But how were you saved?"

"You must not ask me that, either."

"Is not that demanding a good deal of so warm a friend as I am, Charley?"

"I can't help that. I know it's asking a good deal of you, friend Simon, but I really can't act differently; you naturally want to know all my adventures since the moment I fell from the ferry-boat, but I can't tell you a thing, and I want to ask you as a particular favor not to question me about them, and to help to avoid the questions of others."

Simon Munhall scratched his head. For once in his life he was thoroughly puzzled.

"Only one question," he said at length. "The convict who jumped after you—were you saved by him?"

"I was. And, Simon," continued Charley, "I want to ask a great favor of you, and if you care one-half as much for me as you have often professed you will grant it. You could appoint a new man on your force if you were so disposed?"

"That depends."

"Suppose he simply desired a connection with your force

for purposes of his own, and could satisfy you that these purposes were legitimate and were willing to pay for the privilege—what then?"

"Well, that sort of thing has been done before, and might be done again, if we were sure it was all straight and would do us no injury."

"Would you appoint such a man on my recommendation, and ask no questions?"

The detective eyed the boy narrowly for a few moments.

"Charley," he said, at length, "I would do almost anything for you. I can do this, but I run a great risk. If I vouch for him Rooney & Nolan will ask no questions; but remember, if your friend gets the firm into trouble, my discharge, and disgrace as well, is certain."

"Simon, I will vouch for this man—he will not play you false."

"Then, I will appoint him for you; but it's a thing I would do for no one else. I believe you to be a shrewd lad, and one that knows what he is about. I have not made a study of human nature all these years for nothing. Send on your friend. I'll do it for you, blind."

"Many thanks, Simon," replied the boy, somewhat moved. "You will not find your confidence abused, and the day may come when——"

"Not a word, my boy—not a word. Bring on your friend, work out your schemes, and if you want help from a detective who knows a thing or two about the shady ways of this great city, count on me for assistance every time."

Bidding the kind-hearted officer good-by, and promising him a long talk at their boarding-house that night, Charley Evringham hastily left the office.

Ten minutes later the door of Rooney & Nolan's detective agency was opened, and a tall, elegantly dressed man entered. He was somewhat past the middle age, with thick, curly, black hair, plentifully streaked with gray. His mustache was heavy, and of the same color; the remainder of his face was clean-shaved. His clothing was new and of the latest style, his jewelry rich and costly. Such visitors were by no means infrequent at the office of Rooney & Nolan, and the office boy showed the stranger into the presence of Munhall without a word.

"Mr. Munhall, I believe," said the visitor, advancing toward the desk, at which the detective was engaged in writing.

"That's my name, sir," replied Simon; "whom have I the pleasure of addressing?"

"My name is Dominick Roach," replied the visitor, helping himself to a chair. "I desire to connect myself with your force."

The detective looked at him keenly. Could this be Charley's man? His doubts were soon set at rest, for the stranger silently handed him a note.

Simon opened it, and read:

"Friend Munhall—The bearer is the party of whom I spoke. Remember your promise!

"CHARLEY."

Holding the paper between his thumb and forefinger, Simon gazed at his visitor a few moments in silence.

"You wish to become a detective?" he asked, at length.

"Yes, sir, I do," was the reply.

"Charley Evringham has explained to you the conditions under which I am willing to do this?"

"He has, Mr. Munhall, and let me say right here that I fully appreciate your kindness."

"I shall ask but one thing of you."

"And that is?"

"That you will swear to me, upon your honor as a man, that what you are about to do will in no way injure this boy."

"I swear it! It will, on the contrary, if I am successful, greatly benefit him."

"Enough," replied Munhall, rising. "I am old in the ways of the world, sir, and I see that in your face which tells me that you know more of this boy than you care to divulge. Go your way; you shall have whatever assistance a connection with this office can render you, but remember, I shall watch over Charley Evringham, and in so doing you may find me watching you."

The stranger rose also.

"To be watched by a friend, Mr. Munhall," he said, "will afford me an additional feeling of security."

"Humph!" muttered Simon, "we shall see.

"You shall be sworn in and supplied with a badge," he added, "and to-morrow I'll give you such instructions as you may desire. What time will you come?"

"Shall we say at ten?"

"At ten, then, let it be."

"Thanks, Mr. Munhall," said the gentleman, preparing to leave; "many thanks, since you will allow me to recompense you in no other way. You may place your mind perfectly at ease. I shall do your appointment nothing but credit, I assure you."

He held out his hand cordially and grasped that of the detective, then turned to leave. As he did so Simon Munhall scanned his face yet again, with a keen, penetrating glance.

"One moment, Mr. Roach," he said. "I have, it is true, promised not to seek to penetrate into your affairs, but there is that about your face which strikes a chord in my memory—I never forget a face—I have seen you before."

"I think not," was the reply; "I have but recently come to this city."

The detective hesitated, and then approaching the man more closely, whispered with peculiar emphasis:

"I may be wrong—perhaps I am. I have no desire to pry into your private affairs, but if you are engaged in undoing the wrong of a life-time—in ferreting out the hidden record of a terrible crime—if you are anything to the man whose face you remind me of, then in your researches do not neglect the church-yard of St. Boniface. I have no more to say!"

He turned abruptly, and, seating himself at the desk, resumed his writing. For a moment his visitor did not utter a word, but stood gazing at him with a look of great perplexity. Presently he spoke.

"Mr. Munhall," he said, "your advice is good. To follow it shall be one of the first acts of mine."

He turned and left the office.

"Humph!" muttered Simon, gazing after him; "do it, Mr. Dominick, do it, and we shall see what we shall see."

Clapping his hat on the back of his head, Munhall went out.

He made his way to an old abandoned house on the rocks near the east river. It was locally known as Finnegan's Roost and he let himself in with a latch key. Removing his coat, and throwing it into a closet, of which he possessed the key, he drew from the same place a pair of coarse blankets and a pillow, threw them upon the floor, and extinguishing the solitary candle, was ready to stretch himself upon the floor for the night. The room was bitterly cold, but the man had evidently no intention of lighting a fire, although the hearth was just before him, black and dirty, and it would have been but the work of a few moments to have broken off some portion of the woodwork and started a cheerful blaze.

This would have excited suspicion, however, for it was many a long day since smoke had been seen issuing from

the chimney of Finnegan's Roost, and it was not to be thought of for an instant.

But, although his preparations for retiring were complete, he seemed in no hurry to avail himself of them, for placing his hands behind him, he silently paced the floor, lost in thought.

A clock in a neighboring steeple struck first one, and then two, and still he never ceased in his walk. As the latter sound rang out on the still night air it appeared to arouse him, and he abruptly stopped.

"I must sleep," he muttered—"sleep to gather strength for the coming day, for I have much on hand—work which must and shall be accomplished."

He stooped in the darkness and arranged his blankets upon the floor. As he did so his attention was suddenly arrested by a peculiar sound, apparently close behind him. It was a groan. He listened.

Again the sound was repeated and the man sprang to his feet.

"Who is there?" he demanded fiercely.

There was no reply.

The wind howled without, and whistled mournfully down the chimney of the old house.

"Pshaw!" exclaimed Doctor 94; "it was only the wind, after all. I am growing nervous here alone in the dark. I actually thought that Finnegan's ghost was about to pay me a visit."

He again turned to his preparations for sleep.

At that instant a sound met his ears that for the moment froze the very blood in his veins. It was a loud laugh—a wild, ghostly cry. A cry which would have turned to ice the blood of many a braver man than he.

It echoed in the darkness through the deserted rooms and up the broken stairs. Again and again it rang out, now seemingly above him, now below him. Now it seemed to be right at his hand; now it would die away in the dim distance of the apartments on the floor above.

To say that Doctor 94 was not startled would be to say that which is not the truth.

More than that, he was thoroughly alarmed.

Nevertheless, his courage did not desert him for an instant, and he determined to penetrate this mystery to the very end.

Again and again he heard the cry—laughter, groans, wild shouts.

Before this it had been but unmeaning sounds, now it took the form of words.

"Restore the gems of the French regal crown!"

The voice was powerful and deep; the words were uttered in the French tongue. For a moment the man's courage almost failed him. Was this a ghastly visitant from the dead and gone French kings—from that once proud, but now dethroned and broken family, the Bourbons, whose jewels he had but so recently sold? His dead father's trust—had he betrayed it? Was this an intimation of punishment which awaited him for such betrayal? He did not know—he dared not think.

He was even less superstitious than the majority of men, but what there was of this quality in his nature was called into action by his peculiar surroundings. The deserted house—the total darkness—his utter helplessness against a foe that he could not see, all had their effect.

He could bear it no longer. What it all meant he must—he would know.

Hastily producing a match from his pocket, he lit the candle, and, shielding its feeble light with his hand, rushed out into the passageway. Up the broken and rickety stairs and through the deserted chambers above, peering into closets here, into dark corners there—nothing was to be found.

Nothing but blackness, cobwebs and dust.

He would leave the old house—he could bear it no longer, and he made one bound for the stairs, determined upon instant departure. As he did so a bright flame suddenly shot from the darkness below, and there, at the foot of the stairway, standing in the fullness of its lurid glare, was that which turned his heart to stone.

It was the tall, gaunt figure of a man apparently of great height, clothed in a long, flowing white robe. His hair was snowy white, and hung down his back and shoulders in long ringlets; his beard, of the same ghostly hue, reached almost to his waist. His eyes seemed to glow like two coals of fire. The figure raised one bony finger toward the now thoroughly frightened man, and in deep sepulchral tones pronounced these words:

"Dominique de la Roche, restore those gems! My work is not yet done; seek proof in the churchyard of St. Boniface!"

The voice ceased speaking, the light died away. With a cry of horror Doctor 94 fell prostrate to the floor, and Finnegan's Roost was left once more to darkness.

CHAPTER SIX

IN THE CHURCH-YARD OF ST. BONIFACE

THERE still remain a few of the old-time churches standing in New York, in spite of the ravages of time and the march of modern improvement. Among them is the Church of St. Boniface, situated in a narrow by-street—one of that maze of small thoroughfares which open off the western end of Bleecker street.

The Church of St. Boniface has not the grace and massive beauty of old Trinity, nor the age of St. Paul's. It is simply an old French Catholic house of worship, built many years ago, when its parishioners were few in number and poor in purse; but it has, nevertheless, a quaint grace and beauty of its own which renders it an attractive object to the passer-by.

Leaning against one of the pillars in the vestibule of the church stood a man of large, heavy frame, whom the reader will readily recognize as the new addition to Rooney & Nolan's force—Dominick Roach—Doctor 94.

He silently watched the different groups as they passed in.

"I used to come here—a merry, laughing boy!" he murmured. "Ah! how changed all is now!"

At this moment his attention was attracted by a young girl of great beauty, richly dressed, who, attended by a maid, was about to enter the vestibule. Her eyes were black and sparkling; her hair, of the same color, long and glossy, hung in ringlets down her neck. There was that about her face which instantly reminded the detective of the boy whose life he had saved. She was the exact reproduction in female form of Charley Evringham.

He gazed intently upon her, and a deadly pallor suddenly overspread his countenance. He started forward, and would have spoken had not the maid interfered. Coming quickly between them, and bestowing upon the detective a look of surprise and indignation, she hurried her charge into the church, and the door was shut. At that moment the peal of the organ sounded forth in the grand old strains of Mozart's *Twelfth Mass*. The sound seemed to touch the man's heart.

Hastily dashing his hand across his eyes he left the church and walked rapidly away. After the service was over, however, and just as the sexton was about to close the doors, he reappeared. Addressing that official in

the French language, he asked the privilege of consulting the parish register.

"For what year, monsieur?" demanded the sexton.

Roach mentioned the year.

"But, monsieur, I am about to go to my house. It is now *bein tard*—very late—and my Christmas dinner awaits—it will be spoiled."

"Here, monsieur, that will buy you another," replied the detective, handing him at the same time a gold-piece. "I am a detective, and I wish to make an examination which cannot be delayed."

The Frenchman was now all politeness and smiles. He dropped his French, and exclaimed in uncertain English:

"*Certainment*, monsieur! Zis way, eef you please!" and, opening the door, he conducted Roach to a little side-room, and after a few moments' search, produced the register of the parish of St. Boniface. For a moment a strange hesitation seemed to have taken possession of Roach. He reached out his hand for the book, and then drew hurriedly back. Suddenly he seized it, as though in desperation.

"It must be done!" he muttered. "I must control my feelings and look upon those words."

He hastily opened the book and, turning over the leaves, stopped at the tenth day of July. Evidently the entry for which he sought was not there. He turned to the eleventh—still not there; to the twelfth. He had found it! Gazing upon the lines with swimming eyes, he read as follows:

"July 12.—Dominique de la Roche, Count of Rochambaut, born at Château Rochambaut, Department of Loire, France, February 21. Died in New York, July 10, murdered by his only son. Interred in the church-yard of St. Boniface, lot No. 17. May his soul rest in peace!"

Detective Roach closed the book.

"I thank you," he said to the sexton in broken tones, and without another word turned and left the church.

"To-night we shall see!" he muttered, as he hastily descended the steps. "Twice I have been told to search yonder church-yard—once by man, and once by—— To-night I will obey!"

Had any belated traveler chanced to pass the rear end of the church of St. Boniface early on the morning of the day following Christmas, he might, with reasonable cause, have felt a fear for the safety of his purse, for several men, shrouded in heavy black cloaks and wearing masks of the same color, were gathered beneath the high wall. But the narrow street—but little more than an alley—was totally deserted, save for the presence of these men. From the windows of the buildings opposite the church-yard wall not a light was to be seen.

A snow-storm which had been brewing all day had broken over the city, and the white flakes were falling thick and fast. The figures under the wall did not move, and seemed to be waiting for some one not yet arrived. As the bell in the tower of the old church sounded the hour of two, another form appeared to join the watchers beneath the wall. It was a man of large frame; he was shrouded like the rest.

"The hour has arrived!" said the newcomer stepping among them. "Doctors, once more I need your aid!"

"We will serve you!" was the whispered reply of several voices, proceeding evidently from the masked forms which surrounded him.

He strode toward the wall, and a ladder was quickly produced and placed against it. The leader of the band ascended, and leaped over the wall. He carried in his hand a heavy pick-ax. Another form quickly followed him carrying a spade. Another and another ascended and leaped the wall, some carrying spades, some pick-axes.

The last two over the wall pulled the ladder softly up after them, and lowering it on the other side joined their companions. Then slowly and in single file they wended their way among the tombs, their footsteps deadened by the newly fallen snow.

The leader of the band produced from beneath the folds of his cloak a dark-lantern and hurriedly drew back the slide, after which he proceeded to examine the inscriptions upon the stones. His companions watched his movements in silence as he kneeled before a white monument and flashed the lantern upon its sides.

"Dominique de la Roche, Count de Rochambaut. Born February 21; died July 10."

The man rose; he had found that for which he sought. Waving his hand as a signal to his dusky followers they came to his side.

"Dig!" he whispered with evident emotion. "Dig, for I would see the coffin beneath that stone."

Without a word the men—six in number—produced their tools, and throwing aside their cloaks set to work. In another instant the sound of pick-axes striking upon frozen ground echoed through the old church-yard. Not a word was uttered. Their leader leaned against a tree and covered his face with his hands.

Ten minutes elapsed.

The grave was opened and its contents exposed. Then, for the first time, they paused, and wiping their foreheads, laid down their tools. One of the men leaped into the hole.

"Give me the rope, quick!" he exclaimed in a hushed voice. "The doctor's feelings have got the best of him; but we are in danger here, and must finish this job at once!"

The rope was passed down and quickly secured around the box. The man climbed from the grave; all lent a hand, and the coffin was drawn to the ground. Without an instant's hesitation Roach forced the lid. A grinning skeleton lay exposed.

"Hold the lantern!" he whispered huskily.

He crouched still lower, and seizing both hands of the skeleton, examined them with intense eagerness.

"God!" he cried, leaping to his feet; "am I mad? What does this mean? These bones are not the bones of my father? From his right hand he had lost three fingers!"

The hands of the skeleton were both perfect. The man staggered back, his face livid, and his companions gazed in silent amazement.

"There is some foul trick here!" he muttered. "The double warning—the——"

At this instant there rang through the church-yard a sound which filled its hearers with horror. It was a fearful blood-curdling shriek. As it seemed to come from the direction of the church itself all turned and looked that way, and there suddenly appeared before them the figure of an old man of gigantic stature, clad in a loose robe; his beard was white as the falling snow, was long and flowing; his hair, of the same color, hung in ringlets down his back. Advancing slowly toward the open coffin, the figure raised a hand and, pointing toward the skeleton within, exclaimed slowly and in deep, sepulchral tones:

"Dominique de la Roche, gaze into yonder coffin and restore the lost gems of the kingly crown!"

CHAPTER SEVEN

A FRIEND IN NEED

THE men dropped their picks and shovels and made for the wall, but their leader maintained his ground.

"Speak!" he cried, turning full upon the figure. "Speak! In heaven's name who and what are you?"

The figure laughed mockingly and, turning, walked slowly away among the tombs, its long robe of white seeming to mingle with the snow itself. As it retreated there again rang out through the leafless trees these mysterious words:

"Restore!"

The cry dying away in the distance with each repetition, the man who watched it with such fearful interest hesitated no longer.

"Man or fiend!" he cried, springing forward, "whichever you may be, I must and will know now!"

He dashed over the tombs after the retreating figure. His companions, ashamed of their cowardice, yet not daring to return and undo their ghastly work, watched him from the shadow of the wall in silence. Through the thickly falling snow he ran—now leaping among the headstones—now stumbling against the tombs. The figure seemed ever flitting before him, but he could not overtake it.

He approached nearer the church, and the figure suddenly appeared just before him—tall and white in the darkness. It was the apparition of the previous night—the ghost of Finnegan's Roost!

"Halt!" cried the pursuing man. "Stand where you are! I demand further speech with you!"

A low laugh was the sole response as he reached out his hands to grasp it. They clutched at the empty air. The apparition had disappeared!

How or where the man could not tell, but gone it most certainly was, leaving not a trace of its presence behind. The men, who from the shadow of the wall had been watching these proceedings, at signal from their leader now flocked around him.

"Search!" he exclaimed; "examine every headstone—every portion of the church-wall."

There was nothing to be found.

"Come, doctor," said one of the number, sullenly, "if we are to bury that body again, let's be quick about it; there's no use looking for that thing; it's gone, and we ought to be thankful it didn't take us to blazes with it."

What they might have done we cannot tell, for at that moment a shrill whistle was heard from the other side of the wall. It was the signal agreed upon in case of alarm. An instant later the figure of a man jumped down from the wall into the church-yard, throwing a ladder after him as he did so, and dashed into their midst.

"Whist! whist! byes!" he cried in a low hurried whisper; "the cops is on top of ye! Run for your lives. Saze the ladder, and scale the other wall!"

The men rushed toward the ladder. A shout on the other side of the wall was heard, and the loud rapping of a policeman's club upon the pavement rang out on the still night air.

"The other wall, byes—the other wall!" cried the intruder. "It's meself—Bill Leary—that's balked them, for I have their ladder, and divil another can they get for ten minutes to come."

Rushing to the place where he had jumped, he seized the short ladder which he had thrown down, and sped hurriedly over the graves. Now the church yard of St. Boniface is completely inclosed from the street. In the rear, as we have seen, ran the high wall which separated it from the alley beyond; to the right was the church itself; to the left rose the high end wall of a block of brick tenements, while in front was another and lower wall than that in the rear, which separated it from the street on which the church stood. It was toward this wall that Bill Leary ran, carrying the light ladder in his hand.

Nor had the leader of the little band been idle.

Taking in the situation at a glance, he saw that there was not a moment to be lost. He also dashed to the wall on the alley side, and seized the ladder which they themselves had used.

"Save yourselves, doctors!" he cried. "Every man for himself! Over the wall and scatter!"

Grasping the ladder, he hurried with it across the graveyard, and joined Bill Leary at the front, and the doctors followed, leaving their tools by the side of the open coffin, but seizing their black gowns. Hastily climbing the ladders, they dropped one by one into the street. At the same instant a posse of police dashed into the burial-ground from the other side.

"Hold! you robbers of the dead!" they cried. "Stand where you are!"

The Ten Doctors paid no attention, but went over the wall like so many squirrels. The leader remained until the last.

He leaped the wall, dashing one ladder to the ground as he did so. Still clad in his long black cloak, which impeded his motion, he fell violently to the ground, for he had slipped upon the snow-covered pavement in jumping, and his ankle was badly sprained.

The men had scattered—there was not one to be seen, while the police were even now leaping the wall. Capture seemed certain, for he was powerless to rise, when suddenly the door of a taxicab, which he now observed for the first time standing quietly in front of the church-yard, was flung open, and a strong arm dragged him inside.

An instant later, and the taxi dashed hurriedly away, leaving the police staring at the empty pavement. The Ten Doctors had disappeared to a man!

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE MAN IN THE COACH

"WELL, Detective Roach, you had a narrow escape that time!" said the man in the taxi, as the rescued sufferer sank back upon the cushioned seat.

"Ah! it is you, is it?" exclaimed Doctor 94, looking at him narrowly, by the light of a street lamp, as they bowled swiftly along; "it is to Detective Munhall that I am thus indebted!"

"That's my name day-times!" replied the worthy Simon; "and I guess it'll do for to-night; but tell me, Detective Roach, were you not surprised to find me so near at hand?"

"Mr. Munhall, I am surprised at nothing!" replied the other, quietly. "I have lived too hard a life for that—but I thank you for your timely assistance all the same."

"I felt sure that you would take my advice to-night," continued Simon, "and knowing the risk you ran, thought I would be near at hand to render you assistance if needful."

"I owe you a debt of gratitude, Mr. Munhall, for with this ankle of mine I should have been on the way to a police-station at this moment but for your promptness."

"Don't mention it," said Simon, lightly. "So you think, my friend, that I could not surprise you?"

Roach placed his wounded member upon the opposite

seat, and lay back in the taxi, watching his companion curiously. He had not the faintest idea in what direction they were going, but he felt that Simon was his friend, and farther, that he had upon his mind something of which he wished to free himself, and he waited expectantly for it to appear.

"Now, my friend," he said, "you have free permission to surprise me, if you can."

Detective Munhall gazed at him a moment in silence; then, leaning over, he whispered these words in his ear:

"Dominick Roach, you are an escaped convict!"

The man did not move a muscle of his countenance.

"That's no news to either of us," he said; "you knew it when you allowed me to join your force."

Detective Munhall hesitated again.

"I haven't succeeded in surprising you yet, it seems," he said at length; "let me try once more."

"Try as often as you please."

"I'll try again. You have been in Sing Sing for twenty years?"

"Twenty years and three months to a day."

"I have seen you there frequently."

"No doubt."

"Look at me. Did you ever see me until the day you entered my office?"

"Never to my knowledge."

"Think—get your memory back into the past."

"I have been thinking ever since you began to speak. I never saw you before."

"Roach," said Simon, impressively, "your memory fails you. You think you never saw me before in the past, but you did, for on the 10th day of July, at half-past eight o'clock in the morning, you saw me at No. — Nassau street, standing before the dead body of the old Frenchman, De la Roche, who was murdered there!"

The ex-convict turned pale, but he did not utter a sound.

"My office—I was trying to practice law at the time—was directly opposite that of the old Frenchman, and my windows looked directly into his. He was a very eccentric old man, regarded as half crazy by all who did not know him intimately; he spent most of his time in his office, even sleeping there for weeks together.

"I looked out of my window at exactly twenty-five minutes past eight on the morning in question, and casting my eyes into the office of the old Frenchman, what do you suppose I saw?"

If Detective Roach was not surprised now, he was certainly strongly moved by some sensation of equal power, for his face had become deathly pale, his teeth were clenched, and his fingers clutched nervously at the cushions of the seat.

"How can I tell?" he said abruptly, striving to appear calm. "I was not there, and if I were my memory is not good enough to recall every little thing which happened to me twenty years ago. Besides, of what interest is all this to me?"

"You say you were not there?" said Simon, looking him full in the eye.

"No."

"I came into my office early that morning," continued Detective Munhall, keeping his eye firmly fixed upon his companion, "for I had a case on hand upon which I was bestowing an unusual amount of study. The weather was oppressively hot, and the window, close to which my desk stood, of a consequence was open. I had many times before observed the old Frenchman, De la Roche, whose office in the building opposite faced mine; for my windows, as I have already said, looked full into his; and loving to watch curious characters quite as much then as I do now, his movements had become very familiar to me.

"He was a most peculiar individual. Sometimes he would confine himself to his office for days and days together—never leaving it, except for food. He had a sofa-bed in one corner of the office, and here he often slept at night, sometimes keeping up this practice for months in succession, although he was well known to be very rich, having a splendid country seat in New Rochelle on the borders of the Sound, as well as a city house up-town, now called Finnegan's Roost.

"He seemingly was engaged in no business, and entertained few visitors, save an occasional old Frenchman, of much the same stamp as himself, and a young man, whom I afterward knew to be his son. When the Frenchman came, the old man would often bring out his fine wines—of which he always appeared to have a full supply—and they would make very merry together, eating and drinking, and singing French songs, until far into the night. For a long time I thought him a harmless old lunatic, and had almost ceased to pay any attention to his movements, when an event occurred which aroused again all my former curiosity.

"It was an afternoon in the spring. I was standing by my open window, smoking, when my eyes were suddenly dazzled, as from the reflection of the sun thrown upon them by means of a looking-glass. I glanced across the narrow street to the opposite buildings, expecting to find some one playing upon me this well-worn trick, when I suddenly became aware that the light proceeded from the window of the old Frenchman's room.

"I looked more closely. In the center of the office stood two men—one mensieur himself, and the other a younger man of foreign appearance. It was not the visitor who attracted my attention, however, for visitors in the old man's room were a common sight enough—it was that which the Frenchman held in his hand.

"It was a diamond of enormous proportions. He was evidently exhibiting it to the foreigner. Powers above! how it did sparkle! It caught the sunlight and threw it into my eyes with dazzling brilliancy. I uttered an involuntary exclamation of surprise. The old Frenchman seemed to hear me, and looked up quickly to where I stood. In an instant he sprang to the window, pulled down the shade, and I saw the diamond no more."

Detective Munhall paused, and looked intently at his companion, as though trying to read his thoughts. The man had regained his composure, and from his face there was nothing to be learned.

"Quite a romance," he said, as the taxi rattled on. "Is that all?"

"Not half!" returned Simon abruptly; "hear the rest, and you'll see."

He resumed his story.

"For several days the old Frenchman seemed to shun me, and turned away his head when he met me in the street—as he frequently did—as though afraid that I would speak to him. One day he accosted me as follows:

"'I saw you looking at my great crystal the other day.'

"'I couldn't help looking, Mr. de la Roche,' I replied; 'the sunlight flashed the diamond into my eyes.'

"'It no diamond! It no diamond!" cried the old man; 'it only one great crystal that my friend bring me from France!'

"I made him no answer, for I saw plainly that he was trying to throw dust in my eyes, and make me believe that it was not a real jewel which I had seen; but I knew better than that. I knew it was a diamond, and a monstrous great one, too, so I passed on in silence. For some time I saw but little of my eccentric neighbor, as he kept his curtains drawn, and seemed determined to exclude observation.

Indeed. I had well nigh forgotten him and his diamond or crystal, when my attention was again attracted to his room one afternoon by the sound of voices, talking in loud, angry tones.

"I glanced across the street and beheld the old man and his son engaged in a fierce quarrel.

" 'You will not receive my wife!' cried the younger man; 'then you shall not receive me. Where I go she goes also.'

" 'Ah! she is one miserable!' replied the old man fiercely. 'She is one vile woman, and shall never darken my doors'!"

"They kept up this sort of thing for more than an hour, in true French style, parting at last evidently in great rage. The son was a merry, light-hearted young fellow, and I had always felt an interest in him; therefore I was sorry to see him thus quarrel with his parent. But it was not my affair; therefore I did not interfere. Another week passed, during which I saw but little of the father and nothing at all of the son. In fact, I scarcely thought of either until the morning of that memorable day—the tenth of July. It was then that a startling event occurred, and however little it may remain in your memory, Detective Roach, I can assure you it is firmly fixed in mine."

Simon Munhall paused as though expecting some reply, but there was none, and he again resumed his story.

"I had been studying very hard on my case—too hard, in fact—and experienced a strange feeling of lassitude at times. In fact, so closely had I applied myself that I came to my office as early as six o'clock, and put in two or three hours' work before the business of the day began. On the morning in question the heat was intense, and having become greatly overheated with my walk downtown, when I reached my office I felt very badly; so bady, in fact, that I determined to go and consult a doctor.

"I looked at my watch—it was twenty-five minutes past eight; I turned to leave the room, when my attention was suddenly attracted by a terrible cry. It proceeded from the rooms of the old Frenchman opposite.

"The cry was 'Murder! I rushed to the window and looked across the street. A man had just shut the window, of the office opposite, and was retreating into the room. The curtain, which raised from the bottom, was almost drawn, but I, from my position, could see over the top of it, and plainly beheld two forms standing over the sofa-bedstead on which the old man lay. One was his son; but the other was, to me, a stranger. It was he who had cried 'Murder' from the window but a moment previous.

"Fancy my horror to see in the hands of the son—that bright-eyed merry youth whom I had so admired—a huge club or bludgeon with which he bent over his father as though he would beat his brains out. I looked again, and what do you suppose I saw?"

Simon Munhall looked toward his companion. No answer—the man's countenance had become livid.

"Again I ask you, Detective Roach, what do you suppose I saw?" repeated Simon. Turning suddenly upon him with the ferocity of despair, Roach replied:

"You saw me murder my father!" the other fairly shouted in tones of intense agony. "Speak out, man; speak out! I did it with these hands!"

He hid his face in his hands and, strong man that he was, with all the deep wells of feeling dry for years within him, he burst into tears.

"I will speak out! I will shout it from the house-tops when the proper time arrives, and when I do, this is what I shall say," said Munhall. " 'Dominique de la Roche—for you and that light-hearted boy known to me by that name ten years ago are one—Dominique de la Roche, you did not murder your father!' "

His companion uttered a loud exclamation and seized the detective by the arm.

"Man—man!" he cried, "what is this? I have suffered for my crime for twenty years—suffered physically and suffered mentally—suffered mentally the tortures of the damned, and now——"

"Now you are told that you have been suffering for a crime which you never committed!" replied Simon quicky; "and you are told the truth—I saw it all! You dashed the bludgeon away, and sank to the floor with a loud cry; for an instant your companion hesitated, and then seizing the club, he struck the apparently sleeping man a fearful blow, and continued to rain down blows until life must have been extinct."

"And you saw all this and have kept silence for twenty years? Oh, my God! Had you but spoken before, how much suffering and anguish I might have been saved!"

"I kept silent from necessity," replied Munhall quickly. "Hear the rest of my story and judge. The man stooped to the floor and forced the bludgeon into the tightly-clenched hand of the prostrate boy. Then he rushed to the window again and, flinging it up, shouted: 'Murder!'

"This villain, then, was about to make it appear that the son had murdered his father! It was too much for my overheated brain. I fell to the floor in a dead faint. When I recovered my senses, which could have been but a few minutes later, although it seemed to me an age, I began to realize what it all meant. I felt that I had not an instant to lose. I rushed from my office into the street, hatless and coatless as I was.

"I was so weak that I could scarcely walk. My brain seemed on fire; but notwithstanding all this, in less time than I take to tell it, I had gained the room beyond. It was already crowded with people—so quickly do crowds gather in New York. They were trying to raise the unfortunate boy from the floor, where he lay unconscious, and the fatal club firmly clutched in his hand. The real murderer stood before the bed talking volubly to the police, who had now arrived.

"I was wild with excitement. Pushing my way violently through the crowd, I rushed to the bed and, with uplifted hand, would have denounced the man as he stood, when everything suddenly seemed to swim before me, my brain reeled, and I sank unconscious to the floor. My opportunity was gone!

"When I recovered my senses I lay in Bellevue Hospital. I had been there three months, suffering from an attack of brain-fever. When I found myself able to go out I was like a man in a strange world. Friends I had possessed but few; relatives none. My little practice and my money were all gone. Of the exciting events of that day I had never ceased to think.

"An opportunity offered for me to become a detective. I eagerly embraced it, and determined to ferret out the true inwardness of that morning's work. The old Frenchman was said to have been buried in the church-yard you have just left; the son had been sentenced to Sing Sing for life; the entire estate had been taken possession of by a Dr. Marius Burk, nephew by marriage of the old man. I tried to ferret out the mystery, but could make nothing of it. I admit I might have been more active, but my interest gradually died out, and——"

"And I remained in Sing Sing for twenty long years!" replied his companion slowly and with much sadness.

"But I forgive you," replied the other; "forgive you, for in what you have done to-night you have taken a great load from my heart, for now I know that I am innocent of a terrible crime. I know that I did not murder my dear father!"

The taxicab had come to a halt. The chauffeur sprang to the ground and threw open the door. Dominick, the detective, saw, to his surprise, that they were before the hotel at which he had that very morning engaged board. He stepped out of the car with difficulty.

"I leave you here," he said.

"Can you walk?"

"Yes. Good-night. To-morrow I must see you again."

"You shall!" cried Simon, and then springing from the taxi he insisted upon leading the crippled man carefully into the hotel. As he turned to leave him he whispered in his ear:

"One word more, Dominick Roach. The body upon which I saw your compaion rain down those murderous blows was not that of your father!"

With these words Detective Munhall turned and walked hurriedly away.

CHAPTER NINE

THE BALL OF THE CIRCLE OF HARMONY

"NO old gags. I am going to the French ball at the Academy of Music. What's this they call it? I can't say it in French, but it means 'Ball of the Circle of Harmony.'"

"*Bal de Circle de l'Harmonie.*"

"That's it; and I'm going, and I want you to go, too. I've wanted to see one of these French balls for years, so I got two tickets to-day—one for myself and one for you. You had better come."

"No, no, Charley, I had rather stay in to-night; it isn't often I get a night off, and having got one I want to read."

"Oh, bother your reading! Say, Simon, I want you to come, and that's all there is about it!"

"Well, well, my boy, if you have set your mind on my going as strongly as all that, why——"

"You'll go?"

"I suppose I must, but I haven't any costume."

"We can stop at a costumer's and get twenty."

"Have you got yours?"

"Yes."

"Well, what is it?"

"A harlequin's dress—all red and green and yellow, and covered with spangles."

"That will be immense!"

"You can just bet it is; but come, if we're going, it's time we were off."

"All right, Charley; I'll be ready in a few moments. By the way, have you seen your friend Dominick, the detective, lately?"

"Never since the day he joined the force."

"How came you to send him to me, Charley?"

"Well, I promised not to speak of his affairs, but I suppose I may say that much—because he asked me to do so; he saved my life, you know."

"Yes, yes, I know; but, Charley, do you know how strongly you resemble that man?"

"Yes; so they say."

"They say—who says? I thought you had never seen him since the day he joined the force?"

"Oh, some men who saw us together."

"What men?"

"Now, see here, Mr. Detective, you can't pump me!" cried the boy, laughing. "I promised this man I would not talk about his affairs, and I won't, and that's all there is to it! Of course I look like him. Any one can see that—maybe he's my father. I'll never tell you!"

Charley Evringham spoke lightly and without thought, therefore he was somewhat surprised to see the effect which his words produced upon Detective Munhall. That individual stood gazing at him with great intentness for an instant. Then muttering something to himself, he abruptly left the room.

When he returned, a few moments later, his surprised look had disappeared. Telling Charley that he was all ready to accompany him, they left the house together and hurried to New York.

"Stopping at a costumer's, the detective procured the costume of a Turk, with wide blue breeches, red coat, black stockings and a white turban, having upon it a gilt crescent of enormous size. This accomplished they hurried to the Academy of Music; and being shown to the dressing-rooms, hastily donned their costumes and were ushered into the ball.

It was a gay and startling spectacle.

The immense auditorium of the building, floored over and turned into a ball-room, was all ablaze with light and filled with merry maskers. Flags of all nations hung from the walls in festoons; the back of the stage was buried in flowers. The floor itself was alive with dancers clad in every costume that the most fertile brain could devise. And it was early yet—the ball had but just begun. Here the British Lion and the Russian Bear stalked majestically in friendly embrace, arm-in-arm; there, a strutting Turkey Gobbler bore upon his wing a delicate flower-girl.

A stately Puritan, with steeple-crowned hat, and face a yard long at least, looking as though he were fresh from enacting the latest Connecticut Blue Law extant—prohibiting the eating of any food but baked beans on Sunday—was making desperate love to a young lady in the light and airy costume of the ballet.

At one end of the great hall two gay and festive individuals were to be seen, each with an enormous nose, one resembling a flageolet and the other a bassoon, playing what appeared to be a popular air upon their respective organs; while just beyond was his Satanic majesty himself, bestowing his sweetest smiles upon a base viol, with a jockey hat and feather.

The Turk and the harlequin joined the merry throng, and plunged boldly into the thickest of the fun.

For several hours the ball proceeded merrily, both Charley and his friend enjoying themselves with the rest.

Just before midnight the boy found himself in one of those little ante-rooms just back of the stage. Being wearied with dancing, he flung himself into a chair to rest. At the same moment his attention was attracted by the peculiar actions of a couple who had entered the room just behind him.

One was a man dressed in the garb of a cavalier, from whose unwelcome advances his companion, a delicate young flower-girl, seemed trying to escape.

"Let go of me, sir," she cried, pushing away her importunate suitor, who, at this moment sought to throw his arm around her neck.

"One kiss, Pauline, only one!" exclaimed the cavalier, in thick, husky tones.

"Leave me—leave me!" cried the girl. "You are grossly intoxicated! Had I only known you would treat me so I would have died rather than have come with you to this place!"

"But you shall kiss me!" her companion replied, and rushing to the girl's side, he was about to execute his cowardly purpose, when a blow from a harlequin felled him to the floor.

"Lie there, you unmannerly brute!" cried Charley, spurning him with his foot.

The man was too much intoxicated to rise unassisted, but in his efforts to do so his mask fell off and disclosed his features.

"Ah, my gay bird, I've seen you before!" cried Charley, looking down at him. "You are the noble cad who deserted his companion at the theater last December."

The flower girl started forward.

"And you, sir?" she cried.

"I am the young man who came to the rescue of this fellow's companion," replied Charley. "Don't be alarmed, young lady; I will see that you meet with no further insult."

"I cannot sufficiently express my thanks to you," replied the flower-girl, trembling with excitement, "but do not hurt him. He is not in a condition to be responsible for his actions."

Charley was about to reply, when the flower-girl—apparently not knowing what she did—suddenly removed her mask also. The boy gazed at her features in astonishment.

It was as he suspected—the young girl to whose assistance he had gone at the time of the panic in the theater. But it was not this that held his attention.

He saw now with startling distinctness what he had not observed at that time in the more uncertain light of the theater. The face of the flower-girl before him was the exact reproduction of his own image, but in female form! It seemed as though he were gazing at his own reflection in a mirror!

Mechanically he raised his hand to his face and withdrew the mask which concealed it. The effect upon his companion was instantaneous. She saw the resemblance to herself at once.

"Who are you?" she exclaimed, starting back in astonishment.

Charley was about to reply, when a hand from behind suddenly grasped his arm just as he was in the act of restoring the mask to his face.

He turned and beheld the tall and stately form of a lady, clad in the peculiar head-dress and ruff in which painters are fond of representing Queen Elizabeth, leaning upon the arm of a monk. About her neck sparkled a collar of diamonds, emeralds, and rubies, of priceless value. For an instant the lady gazed upon the youth in silence.

"Young man, in God's name, who are you?" she hoarsely exclaimed, letting go her hold upon his arm, and clinging to her companion for support.

"My name is Charley Evringham," answered the boy.

"Evringham! Evringham!" continued the lady, looking from his face to that of the flower-girl; "the name tells me nothing, but the face—— Doctor, is it not wonderful?"

She turned, as though addressing the monk at her side. Before this personage had an opportunity to reply, another and more startling figure joined the little group. It was that of a hermit.

He was tall and gaunt, and wore an immense white beard, reaching nearly to his waist, while his hair hung in ringlets down his back. Clad in a coarse frock, peculiar to his order, he carried a thick oaken staff in his hand, while his features were concealed by a mask of black silk. He stalked into the room without a word, looking neither to the right nor the left, and approaching the lady, seized her by the throat, and tore from her neck the jeweled collar which she wore. Waving it once triumphantly above his head, he stalked from the room and was gone.

Neither Charley nor the monk tried to stop him. The very boldness of the act seemed to have frozen them where they stood. It was for an instant only.

"After him!" cried the monk, springing forward. "After the theft! That collar is of priceless value!"

He dashed out among the merry maskers, Charley and the others, including the fallen cavalier, who had now recovered the perpendicular, following.

"Stop thief! Stop that old man with the long beard!"

There were a dozen old men with long beards among the motley throng—no one knew to whom the words applied.

The music continued, but the dancing suddenly ceased, and the maskers ran hither and thither, pushing and falling over each other in the press. They crowded, they pushed, and they ran. No one seemed to know what had happened.

From a scene of mirth the great auditorium of the Academy of Music became a pandemonium of excitement.

Fortunately no one cried fire, but it was just as bad. Strong men rushed for the entrance, trampling over helpless women in their flight. There were curses, oaths, prayers, and hundreds were thrown down—many were trampled underfoot.

The panic which we have had occasion to describe before was as nothing compared with this. The unfortunate woman whose loss had caused all this was one of the first to fall. Separated from her companion in the maddened crowd, she was crushed helpless to the floor. A moment more and she must have suffered a horrible death, for the throng rushed over her as she vainly sought to regain her feet.

At this critical point a man, clad in the garb of a priest, seized her in his arms and bore her as though she had been a child through the crowd.

"Back! madmen!" he shouted; "back! I say!"

By main strength he forced his way through, and a moment later stood panting by the side of her whom he had rescued in the street. Both their masks had fallen or been torn off, and as the lady's feet touched the pavement both stood revealed.

"How can I ever repay you for your timely assistance?" exclaimed the lady, turning to her rescuer.

The man did not reply. As he gazed upon the face before him, his countenance assumed the hue of death.

"Felicie!"

"My God! It is Dom!"

The man put out his hand and grasped her, but the woman tore herself violently away and fled.

CHAPTER TEN

THE FACE IN THE MIRROR

"WILL the young man who kindly came to the assistance of the flower-girl at the French ball, on Tuesday night, please call at the 'Newport,' Fifty-second street and Broadway. Inquire for Madame Renaud."

"That ought to interest my young friend Charley," said Simon Munhall to himself, as his eyes fell upon the personal column of the *Herald* one morning two or three days after the aforegone events.

Both he and his fellow-masker—the harlequin—had fortunately escaped the panic unharmed.

"Guess I'll send around for him, and see what he has got to say about it," he continued musingly.

To think was to act with Munhall, and he immediately dispatched the office boy with a note to his young friend. As the office in which Charley Evringham was employed was but a short distance from the headquarters of Rooney & Nolan, the boy appeared in a few moments.

"Did you see this, Charley?" asked the detective, handing him the paper.

Charley cast his eyes over the paragraph indicated.

"By George!" he exclaimed, "I believe that is intended for me."

"Haven't a doubt of it if the yarn you gave me about rescuing that flower-girl was straight."

"She was the living image of myself, Simon."

"So you told me."

"Don't you think it very strange?"

"Nothing is strange to me, Charley; and, all joking aside, I think you ought to investigate this matter at once. You have often told me that you know absolutely nothing of your parents or your past history. Now, you don't know who you are at all—suddenly a beautiful young girl appears—she resembles you strongly—she advertises for you to come and see her—she——"

His friend's advice seemed sound, and he determined to follow it, and in less than an hour's time he stood before the door of the "Newport" apartment house.

"Madame Renaud?" he said to the porter who answered his ring.

"Elevator—second—back," replied the man shortly.

The boy, used to metropolitan ways, took the elevator, reached the "second—back," and was ushered into an elegantly-furnished apartment.

"Madame will receive you in a few moments," said the servant to whom he gave his name.

Charley seated himself gingerly upon the edge of one of the satin-covered chairs, and gazed about the room. He had never been in an apartment as elegant before. The rugs were of the finest Indian, the hangings rich and costly. The furniture was entirely in keeping, while ornaments of bronze adorned the mantels, and paintings in rich frames hung on the walls.

"She must be very rich," thought Charley.

Between the windows hung a large mirror, reaching from ceiling to floor. The boy arose and surveyed himself in it at full length. As he did so he suddenly beheld another face looking at him in the mirror from over his shoulder—it was the exact counterpart of his own!

The effect was startling.

He realized instantly that the flower girl of the French ball was behind him; but it seemed as though he were powerless to withdraw his eyes from that reflection.

This remarkable resemblance—could there be any connection between himself and this beautiful girl? Time for such reflections was short, however, as the young lady, with a surprised glance at the mirror, came forward, saying:

"You wished to see my mother, sir?" in a sweet voice, with just the slightest suspicion of a foreign accent.

"I called to see Madame Renaud," replied Charley, awkwardly.

"She will be here presently, Mr. Evringham," the young lady replied; "meanwhile allow me to thank you for your timely assistance at the ball." She motioned Charley to a seat. "Pray be seated, sir," she continued. "I would like to talk with you about that disagreeable occurrence of last Tuesday evening.

Charley silently determined, then and there, that any occurrence which had brought him in contact with this little fairy could be anything but disagreeable so far as he was concerned, but he only bowed and seated himself in silence.

"That man from whose cowardice you have twice saved me," continued the young lady, "is a Mr. Burk, the son of one of my mother's oldest friends. On that account I was induced to overlook his conduct upon the first occasion, only to have it repeated in grosser form upon the second—but here comes my mother, Mr. Evringham!" she exclaimed hastily. "I must not breathe another word of this; it is she who wishes to see you; but once more let me thank you."

She held out to Charlie her dainty little hand, and the boy bent over and pressed it to his lips. The young lady blushed, and drew hastily back. At the same moment the door was flung open, and a lady, elegantly dressed, entered the room.

She was a little above the middle height; her carriage was queenly and elegant; her face, once of surpassing beauty, still bore witness to that fact. Her eyes were coal-black, her hair, of the same color, thick and wavy; her age was apparently about forty or forty-five.

As she entered the room, she gazed from Charley's face to that of the young girl with evident perplexity. Approaching the boy, she held out her hand and said, in winning tones:

"Pauline, my daughter, has already thanked you, I see, by her manner, for your timely assistance upon two occasions. Mr. Evringham, let me thank you for so promptly replying to my advertisement."

"I thought it was intended for me," replied Charley, simply, not knowing what else to say.

"It was intended for you. I wish to talk with you for a few moments. Pauline, you may leave me with Mr. Evringham, dear."

"But, ma, I——"

"Leave us!" replied the elder lady, darting a glance at the girl which seemed to indicate that her manner might not always be as sweet as it appeared just now.

The young girl, with a glance at Charley which aroused strange feelings in his breast, arose and left the room.

"Be seated, sir," said Madame Renaud.

Charley, who had arisen at the lady's entrance, and had since remained standing, obeyed. For a few moments Madame Renaud gazed upon him in silence.

"The name you gave the servant was Evringham," she said, at length. "Is that your true one?"

"Yes, Charley Evringham is my name," replied the boy, surprised at the question.

"Might I inquire who your parents were, Mr. Evringham?"

"I don't know."

The lady gazed upon him intently.

"You have observed, as well as myself," she said at last, "your marvelous resemblance to my daughter. I felt curious to learn if you could by any chance be a connection of my family. This is why I have sent for you. Tell me something of your early history."

"I can tell you very little," replied Charley, "for I know absolutely nothing concerning myself. The first person I can recollect is an old woman with whom I lived—old Bridget she was always called. She used to send me out begging for her. This lasted four or five years; she used to beat me and half starve me, for I used to hate to beg."

"Are you sure this woman was not your mother?" asked Madame Renaud, in a low voice.

"Oh, positive; she told me so a thousand times. I often tried to learn something about my parents from her, but it was no use; she would tell me nothing."

"How long did you remain with this woman?"

"Until I was about seven years old; then I ran away one day and got in with a lot of boys, and sold newspapers and picked up a living in the streets. After that I went to the mission-schools and found out what life really was. I made up my mind to be something better than a newsboy and a ragamuffin—went to night-school, worked at all sorts of things during the day, until finally I got into my present position in a law-office."

The lady seemed greatly affected.

"My boy," she said, "I must see more of you. I lost—I had a sister who lost a son in his infancy, who, had he lived, would have been just your age; you may be he—who knows? But I must and will discover! My husband, Monsieur Renaud, is the secretary of the French ambassador; he is powerful, and will help us. Write down all that you have told me, and a detective shall be employed to trace out your past at once."

"But, madam," stammered Charley, greatly puzzled at this unexpected turn of affairs, "I do not know—I do not like you to be at all this expense on my account."

"That is my affair," she replied, hastily; "do as I tell you."

Madame Renaud produced writing materials, drew up a small table, and motioned to the boy to begin work. Just as he was about to do so the door was opened, and a gentleman entered the room. He cast upon Charley glances of mingled perplexity and suspicion.

"How is this, Felicie?" he exclaimed; "this boy, again?"

The lady started and turned pale.

"Yes, doctor," she replied, quickly, "this boy, again."

"Did I not tell you——" began the man, angrily.

"You forget, doctor, that this house is mine!" cried Madame Renaud.

Her visitor remained silent.

"Go, my boy," she said to Charley, "go now, and to-morrow, at the same hour, return, bringing me the paper you were about to prepare."

Full of doubt and perplexity, Charley Eyringham obeyed, and bowing himself from the room, left the "Newport" and made his way downtown.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

A PAIR OF SCHEMERS

"WHO is that boy, Felicie? What is he doing here?" demanded the man, the instant the door had closed behind our young friend.

"Who is he? I don't know!" was the reply, in scornful tones; "but I propose to find out—it was for that I advertised for him."

"Then you did a very foolish thing."

"That is my own affair—you don't own me now, if I did sell myself to you twenty years ago!"

"I don't claim to own you, nor do I seek to control you. I only advise."

"Yes, you are always advising me—always thrusting upon me your opinions unasked!"

"But my advice is good."

"Not always," replied the lady, impatiently tapping her foot on the carpet.

"See here, Felicie," resumed the man, after a few moments' silence, "there should be no misunderstandings between us—it won't pay. Tell me freely, whom do you believe that boy to be?"

"I believe him to be my son, Marius Burk!" was the fiercely whispered reply; "and if the result proves that I am right, and you attempt to interfere with my plans, I warn you—you do so at your peril! I'm aroused, and no one knows that better than you."

It would have needed but a single glance at Dr. Burk's countenance to have satisfied the most casual observer that he thought she was right.

"I haven't the slightest disposition to interfere with you, Felicie," he replied, in a somewhat modified tone; "but you know as well as I can tell you that you are talking the rankest kind of nonsense; your boy is dead—has been dead these twenty years."

"So you have always said, and so I have always believed, until day before yesterday," replied Madame Renaud; "but I tell you, Dr. Burk, that such a resemblance cannot be accidental. Why, he and Pauline are exactly alike in every feature. Had my little Gaspard lived he would have been just this boy's age; as babies, he and Pauline could not be distinguished apart, for they were twins, as you very well know."

"Felicie, I tell you again your boy is dead. I am certain of what I say."

"Marius, what the fate of my son really was I am satisfied, and always have been, you do know; that you are speaking the truth now, or speaking from any knowledge of the truth, I do not believe."

"But he was killed in that railroad accident—you know it as well as I. Why should I know more of his fate than you?"

"His body was never found."

"No, but the car was burnt to ashes—he perished with it."

The lady shuddered.

"But for that ill-fated journey, my boy might yet be with me," she said, weeping.

"Pshaw, Felicie!" cried the other, impatiently. "Tears! weakness! and in you! I never saw you thus before. What ails you, woman? The boy is better dead, for were he alive, the whole of the De la Roche estates would be his at his majority, as you very well know. What, then, would become of us?"

"My boy would provide for me."

"Your boy, were he alive, would do nothing of the sort; especially if he knew your past history as well as I do. Let this fellow drop now, once and for all—it is only a chance resemblance. Let us hasten the marriage of Julian and Pauline, and the property will be secured to us forever."

"Your son Julian has behaved in a most cowardly and brutal manner toward Pauline upon two occasions; she vows and declares that she will never speak to him again."

"He was drunk."

"He was not the first time, when he deserted her in the theater."

"Then he must have been mad—but he shall apologize. I will make everything all right on that score; they must marry at once. I am sure that Dom is shadowing me wherever I go, and I freely confess, I fear the results."

Madame Renaud shuddered.

"Did I tell you that I had seen him?" she asked.

"You! No! Where?"

"It was he who rescued me from that panic-stricken crowd at the ball."

"The deuce! And did he recognize you?"

"Unfortunately—yes!"

"Worse and worse. He has always believed you dead—thinks you were killed in a railroad accident twenty years ago."

"I know it. He both saw and recognized me. It can't be helped."

"You are positive that he recognized you?"

"Positive—he called my name."

"And what did you do?"

"I? Why, ran away."

"About the best thing you could have done under the circumstances," muttered the doctor. Then, Felicie," he continued, "there is not a moment to be lost. We can neither of us tell what his next move will be."

"Couldn't you have him arrested as an escaped convict?"

The doctor smiled.

"Yes," he replied; "but it is necessary to catch him first. 'First catch your hare,' you know. Would that I knew where to catch mine."

For a few moments neither spoke. Dr. Burk excitedly paced the room. At length he stopped, and, turning to his companion, said:

"Felicie, listen to me and don't interrupt me, except to answer my questions, for we must speak quickly and act rapidly, or all is lost."

"I hear," was the reply.

"When will your husband return from Washington?"

"To-morrow."

"And he sails for France?"

"On Saturday."

"Does he intend to take his jewels?"

"Yes; that is his object in going—to dispose of them."

"Then the loss of the collar is bound to be discovered?"

"Certain."

"It was most imprudent in you to wear it, Felicie."

"I can see that. You have no need to remind me of it."

"Felicie, there is but one man who would—who could have torn that jeweled collar from your neck."

"So I think."

"And that man is——"

"No matter, Marius, no matter! Do not breathe his name. I have so long believed him dead, that to even imagine his continued existence fills me with horror."

The woman was deadly pale now, and her companion seemed almost equally disturbed.

"Desperate cases demand desperate remedies," he said, slowly. "Those jewels formed a part of the collection taken from my house by Dominique de la Roche. He sold them to your husband, and if they cannot be produced, we, to say the least, run a great risk."

The woman shuddered.

"If my husband begins to investigate, there is no telling what he may discover."

"Exactly so," replied the doctor. "But I have a theory. If the person who tore that collar from your neck is the one we believe him to be—if that man still lives—I can think of but one place in which he would be likely to hide the jewels, and there, also, I begin to believe, he has hidden the great diamond for which we have braved such dangers, and for which we have so long searched in vain."

"And that is?"

"In the secret vaults beneath the old house on the rock."

"The place they call Finnegan's Roost?"

"Yes. Would to heaven I had razed the old ruin to the ground, long ago, and our search for the diamond might have been rewarded before this; but, until the estate was actually secured, I would not spend an unnecessary cent."

For a moment the woman appeared to hesitate. Then turning to her companion, she said:

"Marius, we began this plot together, and together we have continued it for twenty years. It is too late to turn back now. Count on me. I will do whatever you say."

"Then," replied the doctor, buttoning up his coat, and preparing to leave, "to-night we will search together the secret vaults!"

CHAPTER TWELVE

THE DIAMOND AT LAST

IT is a cold, raw, disagreeable night.

A sluggish rain had been falling all day, and now, at midnight, it had changed to snow, and the pavements were wet and slippery.

Both the man and woman hurrying along seem desirous of avoiding attention. Both are partially disguised, the former in a shaggy overcoat and slouched hat, the latter in an old waterproof cloak.

"Are we not almost there?" whispered the woman, as they approached Finnegan's Roost.

"Quite," was the reply, "for here is the door."

Looking narrowly up and down the street, to be sure that he was not observed, the man drew a key from his pocket, and stooping, unlocked the door.

"Come," he said, in a low, hurried whisper.

"Boss, can't you give a poor feller a little assistance?"

The man started back. Between himself and his female companion the form of a stranger had suddenly thrust itself. He was a seedy-looking individual. His tattered straw hat was a dismal reminder of the summer long past and gone; his hands projected a long way out of his ragged sleeves; his pantaloons were in tatters and his face—what could be seen of it, shrouded as it was with a heavy, tangled beard—was pinched and blue with the cold.

"Who the mischief are you?" cried the man at the door, roughly. "What do you mean by forcing yourself before this lady? Stand back!"

"I meant no harm," replied the tramp, with the true beggar's whine, "only a couple of cents, boss, just to help me to get a night's lodging."

"I'll help you to blazes! but there, take it; it's the quickest way to be rid of you!"

He thrust a quarter into the beggar's hand.

That dilapidated individual seized the proffered coin, bit it, to test its genuineness, and mumbling thanks, shambled off up the street.

"Where could he have sprung from?" muttered the man at the door.

"I cannot imagine," replied his companion; "but we must not enter now, he may be watching—we had better walk down the street a little way."

They walked slowly down toward the East River for two blocks, and then cautiously returned. The beggar had disappeared.

"Now is our time!" exclaimed the man, and darting through the little door which he had left ajar, he pulled his companion after him, and hastily shut and locked it behind them.

"We're inside at last!" he exclaimed, with a sigh of relief. "Now we have nothing to fear."

The woman shuddered, and tightly grasped his arm. Evidently she did not agree with him.

"Courage, Felicie, courage!" exclaimed the man. "We have had many worse experiences than this. If this night's work is a success it will be our last crooked effort."

They hurried through an old brewery, across the yard, and in a few minutes stood before the rear door of Finnegan's Roost. Producing a key, he hastily opened it, and in another instant they stood within the walls of the owner's mansion.

Dr. Burk—for the reader will readily understand with whom it is we have to deal—produced a dark-lantern, and withdrew the slide.

"To the vaults!" he exclaimed. "The night is half gone already, and we have not yet begun."

"Where are they?" asked Madame Renaud.

"Beneath the cellar, cut in the solid rock; the contractor built them for the brewer's use more than twenty-five years ago."

"Did he live in this house?"

"He built it when he first came from France to New York, immediately after the revolution of 1848."

"Then you think that he would be most likely to hide the diamond here?"

"I think it most probable, and only wonder that it never occurred to me before. But come, not another word. Follow me."

He led the way to a door beneath the stairs.

Opening it, he descended to the cellar, his companion closely following him.

"How dark it is!" she exclaimed.

Dr. Burk made no reply, but stooping down, carefully examined the cellar-floor.

Seizing a great iron ring which lay embedded in the floor, he pulled it with all his strength. A heavy stone trap-door slowly raised. Holding the lantern so that its light shone into the opening, they beheld a ladder leading down into the depths. Dr. Burk descended first. His companion cautiously followed. Upon reaching the bottom of the ladder, he turned up his lantern to its full height, and looked about. They were in a large open chamber, which seemed to be hewn out of the solid rock.

Such, in fact, it was, for here, in years gone by, the brewer had stored his beer.

Opening off from the main chamber were several smaller ones, arched over and bricked upon the sides.

"Marius, I am afraid!" exclaimed Madame Renaud, with a shudder.

"Nonsense, Felicie; there's nothing to fear. Here, take this lantern, and I will light the other."

He hastily produced a second dark lantern from the pocket of his greatcoat, and striking a match upon the rough stone walls, proceeded to light it.

"Now, Felicie," he continued, "rest assured that we will accomplish our object. Some secret compartment unquestionably exists in this chamber, for it would be a part and parcel of the old man's character to build just such a place, and I believe that he did it. Here, take this hammer, sound and carefully examine every foot of the wall upon that side, and I will do the same with the vaults on this."

The woman obeyed in silence. For nearly an hour neither spoke a word. Nor was any sound heard in the vault save the tap! tap! tap! of the hammers as the intruders carefully examined the rocky walls. They sounded every foot of it, but in vain. Nothing whatever was found.

"Curse the old fool!" exclaimed the man, stopping his work at length, and wiping the perspiration from his forehead; "I'm afraid we are on the wrong scent after all."

"Can we have missed any part of the wall?" asked Madame Renaud, wearily laying down her hammer.

"I don't think so."

"Then this night's work is wasted."

"Not so, woman!" exclaimed a deep voice above their heads. "For this night's work you shall receive your full reward!"

Dr. Burk and his companion were shocked with dismay, for upon looking up they beheld a man standing halfway down the ladder, with a cocked pistol in each hand. It was the beggar who had solicited alms.

"Search!" he cried; "search, Marius Burk, for that which you shall never find! Your life I shall spare for future developments; but you, woman, prepare, for as true as there is a God above, this night you shall surely die!"

"It is Dom!" exclaimed Madame Renaud, trembling with fear. "Save me, Marius! Save me!"

As we have said before, Dr. Burk was no coward. With lightning speed he rushed upon the intruder.

"Stand where you are, Dominique de la Roche!" he shouted. "One movement toward that woman and you are a dead man!"

At the same moment a laugh was heard coming from below, and the subterranean chamber was illuminated with the brightness of day. A portion of the cellar floor seemed to have disappeared, leaving an opening of about ten feet square, from which the brilliant light proceeded.

As they gazed there slowly arose from this opening a form bathed in the light, and revealed with fearful distinctness to all present.

First a head, with long flowing beard, white as the driven snow, and ringlets of the same ghastly hue hanging down its back, followed by the form and body of a man clad in a spotless white robe. Around the neck of the apparition sparkled the lost collar of jewels—diamonds, emeralds and rubies, all glowing in the intense brightness of the light. It was the ghost of Finnegan's Roost!

"Avaunt, mortals!" cried the specter, in deep tones. "Leave me in peace, for that which you seek you shall never find!"

Dr. Burk and the woman shuddered, and Dominick, the detective, gazed upon the form with terrible eagerness.

"Behold!" cried the apparition. "I have it here! Feast your eyes upon its light; now and for the last time shall mortal eyes behold the Bhrampoor of Kalaghaat until I, with my own hands, restore it to its rightful place, that it may become again what it once was—the gem of the Bourbon crown!"

Three times the specter waved its hand aloft; each time the astonished watchers beheld in it a diamond of enormous proportions.

All three gazed upon it in speechless wonder, when suddenly the light was extinguished, the queer object and the diamond were gone, and the rocky vault was once more enshrouded in darkness.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

A VISIT FROM AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE

THE winter had departed, and spring, with all its bright freshness, is at hand.

The Ten Doctors meet no more in Finnegan's Roost, the old canal-boat is deserted. In their stead, however, nine store-keepers appeared.

While the nine members of the little band were busily engaged in laying the foundations of profitable trade, their leader, Doctor 94, adhered to his life of a detective.

By the advice of his good friend, Detective Munhall, he did not now confine himself exclusively to his own affairs, but gave a large portion of his time to the matters of Messrs. Rooney & Nolan, and often accepted special commissions, working them up with great skill, and had in several instances made some very clever arrests. In fact, the name of Dominick had begun to be known favorably among the fraternity, and to be feared by the evil-doers of the great city.

We will leave Doctor 94, or Dominick, the Detective, to go on working his way steadily upward, and take a look into the little grocery store of Doctor 4—Mr. Bill Leary.

It wasn't much of a store—Bill preferred to begin in an humble way—still it was a great deal better than none, and although small, it was well stocked with goods, and, better still, they were all paid for, and there was plenty of money to branch out with as soon as their owner should see fit.

Should still further capital be needed Bill Leary had only to say the word to a certain detective whom we know, and one, two, three, or even five thousand dollars would be immediately forthcoming.

"Begorra!" and he fixed himself better nor me!" Bill muttered, as he sat at his desk casting up the accounts of the day, which showed a net profit of over thirty dollars, on

the evening of May 14. "To be sure—praise be to God!—I have enough, and to spare; but Doctor 94 is rolling in riches, so he is, and only gave us poor devils a beggarly tin thousand apiece!—it's not right at all, at all; it should have been share and share alike!"

"So it ought, Bill!" exclaimed a voice at his elbow. "He hasn't used you square."

Billy turned and beheld a man standing outside the high desk on which he was writing, who had entered the shop unobserved.

"An' who the divil are you, that puts in his lip unaxed?" he cried, angrily.

He was a man of medium height, well-dressed, and apparently about fifty years of age. He looked at the shopkeeper intently.

"I think you know me, Bill," he said at length; "indeed, I am quite sure you know me."

"I don't know ye from a crow!" replied the other, angrily; "and what's more, I don't want to know ye—— What do yez want, anyhow? Take it, and git out."

"Are you quite sure you don't know me," Bill Leary?"

"I'm sure of nothing but death an' taxes. Who are ye, anyhow?"

"Well, I will say one thing, now—Bill Leary, you are an ex-convict!"

"Begorra, an' that's no news. If I am I have me discharge, clear and clane, and I can introduce ye to twinty people betwixt here an' Third avenue who know that much itself."

"You were sent up for burglary."

"True for ye—an' I served me sentence like a man. What the deuce is it to you, may I ax?"

"Nothing; but then I remember another crime for which you have not yet been punished."

The wealthy grocer dropped his air of indifference.

"Do you want to know what it is?" asked his visitor.

"I'm not at all particular—I'd rather know yer name."

"Never mind my name for a moment—let me see if I can refresh your memory—do you remember the old New York Hospital which used to stand on Broadway below Worth street?"

"Faith an' I do," Bill said; "an' what thin?"

"Cast your memory back twenty years, and see if you can recall a certain patient who died there, and whose corpse was stolen from the building in the dead of night?"

The man knew his visitor now.

"Remember! ye murdering villian!" he exclaimed; "indade, an' I remember but too well; and I know ye now, for the scoundrel ye are, Dr. Burk—it's a fine man ye are to talk to the likes of me!"

"Hush! hush!" exclaimed the other; "not so loud, Bill, not so loud. We did a little business together then, and we may do more now, that will be as profitable to us both as that job was."

"I want nothing to do with ye; ye are a dirthy trickster, so ye are. I knew himself in Sing Sing—I recognized him the minute I clapped me two eyes on his handsome young face when I joined him there, ten years later. 'Bill, me boy,' says I to meself, says I, ''twas you an' that dirthy spalpeen of a Burk that sint that lad here'—an' I did me best to make his lot an aisy one, so I did!"

"And how has he rewarded you? Has it been share and share alike?"

"That's none of your business; the gems were his own."

"The gems were mine; he robbed me of them, and I strongly suspect, from the remarks I overheard you make, that you were one of the gang who helped him to steal them."

The newly-made grocer made no reply.

"But enough of this, Bill Leary," continued his visitor. "I want to use you—will you help me?"

"Why should I?"

"First, because I can send you back to Sing Sing prison with a wave of my hand. Second, because if your Dr. 94, as you call him, gave you ten thousand for helping to rob me, I will give you double that sum, if you will help me work my ends against him."

"Your first reason is n. g.—I could send you up as quick as you could send me."

"You forget that you are an ex-convict; your testimony would be worthless. Besides, would it pay?"

"Divil a cint."

"And the other way?"

"How much did you say?"

"Thirty thousand?"

"Well!" exclaimed Bill Leary, after a few moments' hesitation, "he who pays best gets most. Out with it—what's your racket? I am your man."

Dr. Burk drew nearer, and lowered his voice to a whisper.

"Bill," he said, "do you know a boy in this city named Charley Evringham?"

"I do. I have seen him several times with him that we both know."

"I thought as much. Bill, I want the boy to disappear."

"Doctor, I've been on this job before."

"You promised I should never see him again, Bill, and for that job I paid you well."

"I couldn't kill the wee baby, me heart was too tender."

"What did you do with the baby I gave you to dispose of?"

"Oh, jist left him with me aunt, Bridget O'Reilly, down in Mulberry street."

"And then——"

"Oh, begorra, an' as soon as the little fellow got big enough to go in panties, he ran away, an' me aunt couldn't coax him back again."

"And for this I paid you five thousand dollars. You did your work well. Is your aunt still living?"

"Dead an' gone to glory these tin years—heaven rest her soul!"

"Half a pound of your best green tea, please."

The two men had been talking in the rear of the store, the front of which was but dimly lighted, with their backs to the door. The above request was made in a thin, cracked voice; as they heard it both started in guilty fear, and turned quickly around. There stood a man bent with age, with short white hair, slouched hat and heavy muffler, his eyes concealed by a pair of green spectacles.

"I'm in somewhat of a hurry," he said, as Bill Leary stood glaring at him. "If you can wait on me I'll be obliged to you."

The shop-keeper did so in silence, and the old man, on receiving his tea, hobbled away.

"An' it's a bell that'll go on that door to-morrer," muttered Bill Leary, as he watched his retreating form. "This is the second man that's got in unbeknownst to me to-night. Do ye think, doctor, we were overheard?"

"No—no!" replied Dr. Burk, hurriedly; "he was probably too deaf to hear, and it was plain that he was half blind. Now, then, will you serve me or your Doctor 94? Choose quick!"

"Good Lord—good divil!" said the tempted grocer, hesitatingly. "I think, doctor, I choose the first, for he's generally the quickest pay."

"Done!" cried the other. "You'll find him cash on delivery, Bill. And to show you that I mean business, there's a thousand dollars down. Now listen to me, and I'll tell you what to do."

He hastily gave his newly-purchased ally full information as to Charley Evringham's movements, which he had of late caused to be closely observed.

"I shall expect a report from you in a few days," he said; "and now, Bill, good-night."

Had he glanced behind him as he emerged from the door, he might have seen the purchaser of the tea standing in the shadow of the brewery wall. He stood straight and firm enough now, as he gazed after the physician's retreating form.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

CHARLEY EVRINGHAM

CHARLEY EVRINGHAM had fallen desperately in love. Every one who knew him noticed the change in his manner, but no one, save, perhaps, that keen-eyed detective, Simon Munhall, divined the true cause. Nor was Charley wholly aware of it himself. He knew that little Pauline Renaud—his double, as he called her—was the prettiest girl he had ever seen, and yet he was ashamed to say so, for it seemed like praising his own beauty.

He would not have dared to aspire to the hand of one whose sphere seemed so far above his own, and yet the boy had become a frequent visitor at the "Newport," and scarcely a week passed without a call from him at the apartments of Madame Renaud.

Thus Charley and Pauline were thrown much together, and often passed evening after evening in each other's company. It was during these visits that he learned something of her past history—learned that she was not the daughter of Monsieur Renaud, the French Ambassador, who was now in Europe on important business, it was said, but a daughter of madame, his wife by a former marriage. As their intimacy increased he learned more, for the girl was far from happy, and felt that longing of unhappy people for some one in whom to confide. What more natural, then, than her choosing for her confidant this dark-haired youth, the exact counterpart of herself?

It was at this time that Charley learned that Madame Renaud, with all her cordiality to him, was far from possessing an angelic disposition—learned that her temper was bad, and her nature selfish and mean, and that she had so treated Pauline that life had become an almost insupportable burden to the young girl.

"She has caused me to become engaged, against my will, to Julian Burk, the son of Doctor Burk, of New Rochelle—the man from whose insults and cowardice you have twice saved me," confided Pauline to Charley one evening.

"What! that drunken puppy?"

"Yes; and I had rather die than marry him!"

"And I had rather kill him than see you his wife, Pauline!" exclaimed Charley, seizing her hand in sudden passion.

"For my sake, Charley?" asked the girl, softly, and striving to draw her hand away.

"Yes, Pauline! for your sake! I would brave death itself! Pauline, I love you! oh, how deeply I love you!"

The secret was out. And Pauline, did she object?

Not she. They felt strongly drawn toward one another.

Charley crossed Fifty-second street when he left the girl, and walked rapidly toward Broadway. As he did so a man sprang softly out from the shadow of a building and stole after him.

Charley hit up a quick pace, and reaching Fifty-ninth street, entered the Park gate. The man who was closely following him entered also. Charley strolled up one of the avenues musing and thinking of Pauline, until he had reached one of the vaulted archways leading under a bridge. The hour was late and the park deserted.

As Charley entered the archway, he could not help observing how utterly dark it was; every light had been extinguished, and nothing was visible one step in advance. At that moment he heard a quick step behind him, and before he could realize what had happened, a heavy sand bag struck him on the head. He sank to the earth without a cry. His assailant stooped over him, and tearing open his breast, felt of his heart.

"Begorra, an' it's kilt he is, I'm feared?" he muttered, "but I've no time to lose!"

He whistled in a peculiar manner, and there was a similar whistle from among the shrubbery in reply, and a man crept out of the bushes and joined him.

"Here, help me carry this boy to the taxi," whispered the man who had attacked Charley. "Where's the gateman? Still absent from his post?"

"No, he has just returned."

"Then we must hand him over the wall, for a park policeman is liable to pounce on us at any moment."

Seizing the lifeless form of Charley, the two hurriedly carried the unconscious body between them to a lonely spot under the Fifty-ninth street wall. Here they stopped.

"Over the wall, Patsy!" exclaimed the man.

"Let me see where the copper is first," replied the other.

Slowly raising his head above the wall he peered up and down the street.

"All right," he whispered, hoarsely, at the same instant leaping over the wall.

"Here, hand over the boy!" he whispered, holding up his hands from the other side.

Bill obeyed, and, passing over the body of the boy leaped the wall himself. A taxi stood near. The door was flung quickly open and Charley was thrown hastily inside.

Bill jumped in after him, Burk leaped on the car and seized the steering wheel.

At that instant a tall heavy man, dressed like a sailor, sprang over the park wall.

"Hold on!" he cried. But the taxi drove rapidly away.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

WHAT PAULINE HEARD

THE door of Madame Renaud's apartments in the "Newport" had hardly closed upon the form of Charley Evringham, when it was re-opened, and Dr. Marius Burk was ushered in. The countenance of this individual bore an expression of greater satisfaction than it had for months previous. Evidently his plans were working well.

"Call madame," he said to the servant who had ushered him in, as he threw aside his wraps and handed them to the man. The polite French domestic obeyed in silence.

"Things are working well," muttered the doctor, pacing the floor. "Bill Leary will catch that young scamp tonight and settle his fate. Julian shall marry Pauline at once, and if the De la Roche estates cannot be secured to me, they will be to my son. As to the old man—if he still lives—if that were indeed he that we saw in the vaults on that terrible night, let him look to himself! If he comes between me and success, if he is not a ghost already, he shall soon become one in actual fact!"

Madame Renaud entered the room.

"Ah! Felicie, is it you?" he said, ceasing his walk and advancing toward her."

"What do you desire at this late hour?"

"To hasten matters. Julian and Pauline must marry at once."

"But good gracious, man, they can't marry to-night. Why this hurry? They are both young yet."

"Have you forgotten the old man's will? If so, listen; I will rehearse it to you."

"Go on," she said; "say what you have to say. I am tired and wish to retire."

"Felicie," he began, "when you married Dominique de la Roche, the younger, twenty years ago, his father hated you."

"I am aware of that fact."

"Don't interrupt, but listen. You married the son for two reasons. First, because I told you to do so, and in those days you were fully under my control. Second, because you desired to obtain the jewels which the old man possessed, and which he preserved so carefully—more especially the great diamond, which we have so long sought for in vain.

"The jewels were given him in trust at the fall of the French monarchy in 1848, when Louis Philippe, the Orleanist, and last of the Bourbon kings, ran away from Paris, and deserted his throne, to hold until the Bourbon family should again be restored. Even at that time you knew your present husband, Monsieur Renaud, well, and you knew him to be an agent, sent by the Emperor of France, Louis Napoleon, to obtain that very gem, the great diamond, the Bhrampoor of Kalaghaat in particular. We met this man together, and we promised that the jewels should be his. Had we succeeded in obtaining them, Felicie, we probably should have been married. My wife was even then dead, and with you I was desperately in love."

"Why this long rehearsal of the past?" madame asked impatiently; "say what you have to say, doctor, and drop these reminiscences—they are unpleasant."

"So they are," was his reply; "but do you remember the day old De la Roche ordered you from his house and commanded you never to darken his doors again? Ah! I see you do; that was decidedly unpleasant. He caught you searching his private desk for the key of his safe—caught you with the key in your hand! For that you would have murdered him! For that, and the desire to obtain his wealth and be freed from his son, you concocted the scheme which you and I both intended should have removed him forever. But before we could put it into action the old man made his will—at my instigation—and this is the way it read. I remember it all as plainly as though it were in print before me: 'Whereas, my son, Dominique de la Roche, Jr., has thrown himself away upon a worthless woman, I do hereby cut him off from all interest in my estates, and bequeath everything of which I may die possessed to my nephew, Marius Burk, to be held in trust for my grandchildren, should any be born of this iniquitous marriage, providing, however, that my son, Dominique de la Roche, Jr., continue to live with the woman, Felicie Durant, now known as Felicie de la Roche. Should he, however, repent of his disobedience and leave her, the above clause becomes null and void, and my entire estate becomes his property.'"

"Are you through?" madame asked, shortly.

"Through with that—but you see the exigency of the case—Dominique de la Roche, your husband, is alive—the old man may be; under the first clause of the will I have held the property for twenty years, we have both enjoyed it, and too well to lose it now. Pauline is nearly of age, and to secure it to us must marry my son."

"But this boy? Suppose he is, as I believe, Pauline's twin brother, lost to me twenty years ago?"

At this moment a muffled sound like a smothered scream was heard.

"What is that?" cried the man, in alarm.

He opened the door and looked into the passage—it was empty.

"Some one on the floor above," he muttered.

Dr. Burk was wrong. The sound proceeded from that very room. Had his eyes turned behind him, at the moment of that smothered scream, he would have beheld a white scared face, peering out from the folds of the heavy damask curtains, which shrouded one of the windows. It was Pauline!

She had been concealed there upon his first entrance to the room, and always disliking the man, had remained.

Charley her brother! and she but a few moments before had received and returned his declaration of love.

Her mother a murderess! for so she had understood the doctor's words. But worse was yet to come.

"Well, Felicie, what do you say?" continued Dr. Burk, returning to his seat. "When shall this marriage be?"

"But the boy! the boy!"

"If he is your son, and you satisfy yourself of that fact, why, then, he must come in for his share—that's all."

"But Pauline despises Julian after his disgraceful conduct towards her. She will never consent."

"He is quite as good as she whose father is a convict, and whose mother is a——. Well, Felicie, you know you were never divorced from Dom, to say nothing of other matters; and as you are now married again, I am inclined to think that our children are about equal on the score of respectability."

The woman writhed under this taunt.

"Enough of this," she exclaimed. "Is there no other way?"

"None. Dom may be down upon us at any moment with some trap or other. It was only by my courage and that mysterious appearance that we escaped his vengeance the other night, but the property once secured to his daughter——"

"Of whose existence he is ignorant. He does not know that children were born to him by me, Marius."

"No matter; once vested in her, I say, the estate is secured to us—it must be done."

"I think you are right," replied the woman, slowly, after a few minutes' silence; "for our own safety it must be done."

"And if Pauline should refuse?"

"I will force her to submit."

"When shall I see you again?"

"Whenever you please."

"Shall it be to-morrow?"

"Very well, to-morrow let it be then, and Pauline shall be prepared. Now, good-night!"

The man resumed his wraps and departed; the woman retired to her own apartments; the servant turned off the lights, and the parlor was left in darknes. Then it was that the heavy damask curtains were parted, and Pauline emerged from their folds.

"Lost! all lost!" she cried, clasping her hands above her head in an agony of bitterness. "I can stay here no longer! I had rather beg my bread from door to door than to lend my aid to their schemes. Home, mother, friends! all wiped out and obliterated at one fell blow!"

With countenance like marble, the young girl hurried to her own apartments. A few moments later she softly descended the main stairway of the "Newport," dressed in her plainest garments. The gate was opened for her, and without even a look behind she went out into the night.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

OLD STORIES

FROM what we already know of the phlegmatic character of Simon Munhall, and of his extreme love for tobacco—which, by the way, was the only love he had ever been guilty of—we shall not be surprised to know that he had been found one bright morning in the spring, a week previous to the events of the last chapter, again seated in his office smoking a pipe.

"What a wonderful man Detective Roach has proved himself to be," he muttered, as he sat alone in his little office, having just filled up his comforter again. "He has made some most clever arrests, but what puzzles me is how he lives."

Evidently Simon had never heard of the Ten Doctors, and their midnight visit.

"Then the boy," he continued; "I am sure there must be some connection between them. He is the living image of the man as I saw him twenty years ago, when——"

"Yes, madam, this is the office of Rooney & Noland. Walk in and take a chair."

It was a lady, elegantly dressed, who had thus interrupted the detective's soliloquy, being at that moment ushered into the office by the boy.

"I desire to engage the services of one of your detectives for an investigation," she said, with a slightly foreign accent.

"Most happy to accommodate you, madam, I am sure," replied the polite Simon. "May I inquire the nature of the investigation which you desire us to undertake?"

"Certainly, sir," replied the lady. "My name is Madame Renaud. I live at the 'Newport.' My husband is Pierre Renaud, the French Ambassador to America."

"And the nature of the investigation you wish pursued?"

"To trace out the past history and establish the identity of a boy."

"Might I ask the boy's name?" Simon asked.

"Certainly; his name is Charley Evringham; he is employed by a lawyer named Gibwalter, at 102 Nassau street; his residence is at the boarding-house of Mrs. Riggs, 91 Pennypacker street, Brooklyn."

"Yes," replied Simon, "I know the boarding-house of Mrs. Riggs, and the lawyer you mention."

"Then you can recommend to me a course of action?"

"Madame Renaud," said Simon, with an air of great interest, "I can recommend to you one of our force, who is particularly adapted to such work."

The lady bowed. Detective Munhall touched a bell and the office boy appeared.

"Is Detective Roach in the office?" he asked.

"He is—in the general room up-stairs, sir."

"Send him here."

The boy disappeared. Presently he returned and ushered in an elderly man, apparently about sixty years of age, plainly dressed, with snow-white hair. His eyes were concealed by a pair of green spectacles—his mouth by a heavy white mustache.

"Madame Renaud," said Simon, rising, and at the same time watching his client narrowly, "this is Detective Roach, of our force."

Madame slightly bowed. The old man returned her salute with the utmost composure.

"I will leave you together," said Simon, turning to depart from the room. "State your case freely, madam; if any one can help you this is the man."

So saying he passed into the outer office, leaving his client and the detective alone.

"I wish, sir, to establish the identity of a boy," began the lady.

"His name?" demanded the detective, in an abrupt tone.

"Charley Evringham."

"Address?"

"He lives at 91 Pennypacker street, Brooklyn; he is employed in the law-office of Mr. Gibwalter, 102 Nassau street, this city."

"Tell me all about him, and I will see what can be done."

"I am of French parentage," madame said, "although born in this country. My maiden name was Felicie Durant—but this does not matter. At an early age I was induced to marry a man named Dominique de la Roche. This man was a murderer and a parricide."

The old man shut his hands tightly, and clenched his teeth, but he uttered no sound.

"For that crime," continued Madame Renaud, "he was convicted and sentenced to State's prison for life. I never loved the man, but married him for a purpose—no matter what—and after he went to prison, I took means to lead him to believe me dead. Far from this being the true state of affairs, however, I was not only alive and well, but six months after his sentence became the mother of twins—a boy and a girl!"

At this announcement a fearful change seemed to come over the old man. He sprang from his chair, and with a muttered exclamation took one step toward the lady. Then recovering himself with difficulty, he passed his hand abruptly across his forehead.

"Pardon me, madame," he said, slowly and in broken accents, as though laboring for breath. "My heart troubles me—at times—I have a spasm—now—it is over—proceed with your story," and he sank back into his chair.

"Of the birth of these children my husband was never informed, but to this day believes himself a childless man, while I, much as I hated him, cherished his offspring with all a mother's love. About three years after their birth, business of importance called me to Albany. On the return trip by the railroad, a fearful accident occurred. The train upon which I had taken passage with my children ran off the track and rolled down a steep embankment. I and my little girl escaped unharmed, but my son—my little Gaspard, as I had called him, for my father—was never seen again. Not even his body was found, as the car in which I sat, together with several others, were burned to ashes. I was assured upon good authority, and I always believed that he perished in the flames.

"In this belief I rested for years, until recently circumstances which I need not name threw me in contact with this boy, whose name I have given you. Judge, then, my astonishment upon beholding him, when I saw that his resemblance to my first husband was great, and to my daughter perfect. They looked so much alike that, had they been dressed in a similar manner, it would have been difficult to distinguish one from the other. More than this, the boy, upon inquiry, proved to be an orphan—a foundling, with no knowledge of his past whatever. This is all I have to tell. I believe this boy to be my son. If he is, he is joint heir with my daughter to an immense estate, and his rights must and shall be recognized. Should he prove to be my son, he will have powerful enemies, and all investigations must be conducted with the greatest secrecy."

"Is that all?" said the old man, questionably, looking at her through his green spectacles.

"All," was the reply. "See the boy, talk with him as to what he knows concerning his past, trace it up point by point, and report to me, and you shall be liberally rewarded."

The old man rose. "Madame Renaud," he said, "your wishes shall be executed to the letter. Depend upon me. The identity of Charley Evringham shall certainly be es-

tablished. As to rewards, you can pay the office the usual fee for such services; personally, I shall receive nothing from you."

He opened the door and politely bowed her out. His face was as white as his hair now—he seemed to restrain himself with difficulty.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

BACK ON THE OLD CANALER

DOMINICK, the detective, set about his investigations concerning the identity of Charley Everingham at once, and upon the night of May 14, obtained, as we have seen, an important clue. Had he been a little more prompt to act, Charley might have been saved much suffering. But the best of us fall at times, and great as was the interest felt by the detective in the work he had in charge, he reached the top of the wall of Central Park too late to prevent the abduction of the boy. Dominick's disappointment and chagrin knew no bounds. That Bill Leary, faithless to his oath as a member of the society of the Ten Doctors, and urged on by Marius Burk and his gold, had carried off the boy, he felt certain, although he had been unable to recognize him at the time of the abduction, he having been simply shadowing the boy.

He had watched him for two days ever since the conversation in the grocery story of Doctor 4, in fact, never knowing sleep, scarce taking food, and yet he felt no fatigue. Thinking Charley would proceed directly to the elevated railway, and make for home after leaving the "Newport," the detective, desiring above all things to be unobserved, had foolishly gone ahead of him for a few blocks, intending to intercept him before he reached the station. This was fatal to his plans, for Charley, after hesitating for a moment, went in directly the opposite direction; while Leary, shrewder for once than his master, had immediately followed closely upon him.

The blow with the sandbag had been a terrible one. Bill Leary had struck harder than he had intended, for it was no part of his plan to kill the youth.

He had determined to take the boy to the old canal-boat, which still lay grounded upon the Jersey meadows, far from the reach of any one. There he thought he would be safe, and it was his purpose to leave the boy there, securely guarded, to be produced when the right time came.

The Ten Doctors had long since abandoned the old boat to its fate. That Doctor 94 knew of his purpose he did not for an instant dream. The taxi drove rapidly to the Desbrosses Street Ferry, and crossing to Jersey City, passed over the hill and stopped at a lonely spot on the edge of the meadows.

"Rise up, me lad!" he exclaimed, as the taxi came to a halt, seizing Charley by the shoulders and shaking him.

There was no response. The boy was evidently badly stunned. His fears were groundless, however, for no sooner had he taken Charley out of the taxi and laid him on the grass, with the fresh, soft air from the meadows blowing full upon his face, than he revived. Great was his astonishment to find himself lying there, bound hand and foot.

As he lay there wondering, unable to move, two men approached.

"Pick him up and put him in the boat, quick!" said one; "some one may be along and see us."

"Where are you taking me to—what does all this mean?" cried Charley, as the man stooped over him to obey.

"Begorra! an' he's come to at last, the little divil!" exclaimed the second man, likewise bending over him.

"Was it you that hit me on the head?" demanded the boy.

"Faith an' it was," replied Leary with a short laugh.

Charley could not see the face of either of his captors clearly, or he might have recognized Bill Leary as one whom he had met before.

"What did you do it for?" he cried; "what does all this mean, anyway? I never harmed you."

"Not the worth of a penny; but you can do me a power of good."

"How so?"

"That's me own business."

"But I think it interests me."

"Whist! whist, lad! so it does, but there's many an interesting thing that ye'll niver find out, and if this ain't one of thim, it's a twin brother. Now be quiet, an' go with Patsy, an' don't say a word."

Charley was totally at a loss to understand the situation. There was no time for further questioning, however, for the man called Patsy at once seized him and threw him over his back as though he had been a sack of meal.

He was carried down a little bank, and thrown into a boat which lay in one of the little creeks in which the meadows abound. Charley, lying as he was flat on his back in the bottom of the boat, could see little save the stars above him, but from the increasing freshness of the air, he felt certain that they were approaching the bay. He was right, for a moment later the boat suddenly came in contact with some large object, the oars were hastily shipped, and Leary's companion jumped out and made fast.

"Pass up the boy, Bill," he said, looking down from above.

Charley was seized and passed up to the man's outstretched arms. Bill Leary immediately followed.

"Now, then, me lad, here we are," he cried. "This is your second visit to the villa by the seaside. Come, look around—do you recognize the locality?"

Gazing about, Charley discovered to his surprise that he was on the old canal-boat which had afforded such opportune shelter to himself and his convict companion on that terrible night the December before.

He had no time for reflection, for they carried him into the little cabin. It was dimly illuminated by a solitary candle, which the second man had lighted and placed in a bottle on the table. Around the sides were the bunks so recently occupied by the Ten Doctors. The door was securely fastened, and the elder of the two men approached him.

"Now, boy!" he exclaimed, "promise to remain quiet-like, an' I'll loosen your bonds!"

"Why do you seek to detain me here?" cried the boy fiercely; "let me go!" Then Charley for the first time had a good look at Leary's face and recognized him.

"Bill Leary," he said at length, slowly, "I recognize you now as he who was created Doctor No. 4 in this cabin last winter, but this is not the first time I have seen you, nor is that the name you always bore."

"What do you mean?" cried the man, fiercely. "What nonsense are ye givin' me now?"

"What do I mean?" replied the boy, with peculiar emphasis. "I mean this: You are Jim Riley, thief and resurrectionist, and I believe, murderer!" and, drawing up his trousers, he pointed to a large scar on his left leg, just above the knee.

The man looked at it, and laughed.

"I see your memory is good," he said

"Yes!" cried Charley, "I know you now; that is the effect of a blow from your hands, struck fifteen years ago!"

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

OLD FRENCHY

IN one of the upper rooms of an old frame building on East Forty-eighth street, a few doors below the little shop kept by Bill Leary, there lived a remarkable man. He was remarkable in his personal appearance and equally so in his actions. In fact, he was considered by the neighbors a lunatic of the milder type.

Tall, gaunt and straight as straight could be imagined, with a long, snow-white beard reaching almost to his waist, hair of the same color, hanging in long ringlets over his neck and shoulders. A large, piercing, black eye which beamed out from under his bushy white eye-brows with a wild, insane light, it needed but one glance at the man's countenance to see that reason had fled.

That it was difficult to draw him into conversation, those who had succeeded in so doing had been astonished at his wild talk, in broken English, of fabulous wealth of diamonds and other gems.

Such was Bill Leary's neighbor, who, since the opening of the little store, had become a regular customer for such small purchases as he was forced to make.

Upon the evening of Charley Evringham's startling adventure, shortly after eight o'clock, Old Frenchy emerged, according to his usual habit, from his door, and hurried away.

At last he suddenly came to a halt.

Before him stood an old-fashioned church, at the left of which ran a high wall. Tall trees towered above it, reaching out their limbs to the midnight sky, and through an iron gate-way a grave-yard could be seen.

The old man grasped the bars with both hands, and remained gazing at the white stones, which stood out in the moonlight like so many sentinels guarding the graves of the dead.

"How are you, old friends?" he muttered; "neighbors and companions, I am glad to see you this beautiful night!"

The silent stones made no response, but at that moment his attention was attracted by a low moan coming apparently from beneath his feet. He looked down and beheld the dark outline of a woman's form crouching beneath the graveyard wall. The old man bent over her.

"Daughter, what ails thee?" he said, kindly.

The girl sprang to her feet. Her eyes were red with weeping, despair was written upon her countenance.

"I am wretched, miserable!" she cried; "all that I valued in life has been stricken from me; I care not whether I live or die!"

Either her voice or her appearance seemed to produce a remarkable effect upon the old man.

"Ah! I've found you at last!" he cried. "Night after night, year after year, I have searched for you, and now you have come—my boy, my little boy! But no—you are a woman!"

He gazed at her with a look of vacant bewilderment and perplexity.

"My name is Pauline," replied the girl, sadly. "You seem to be disturbed. What troubles you, old man? Are you miserable like myself? Perhaps, wretched even as I am, I can render you some assistance?"

"Oh, no," replied the old man, "nobody can help me, for I am dead, you know—dead twenty years ago, and buried under yonder stone."

"Poor old man," she murmured, "his condition is worse than mine, for God has evidently taken from him his reason, and he knows not what he says."

"What is your name, sir?" she asked, pityingly.

"It used to be Dominique de la Roche, before I died," was the reply, "but that's something I never tell anybody; but I will tell you, for you look so much like my boy! Oh, he was a good lad before they took him away. What did they do with him! Do you know?"

Pauline gazed at the old man in silent amazement. The words of Dr. Burk flashed through her mind: "Dom, your husband is alive; the old man may be."

"What did they do with your boy?" she asked, excitedly, grasping him by the hand.

"Oh, they took him away—I don't know where," replied the old man. "They killed me first, and buried me in there; then they locked up my ghost, and said it was mad, but I outwitted them. I got the best of the miserable wretches, for I escaped, and they never caught me." He laughed loud and wildly.

Pauline shuddered.

"You mustn't mind what I say, miss," he continued, observing her agitation, "for I am only a ghost—a poor old ghost. Are you afraid of ghosts?"

"I'm not afraid of you."

"I am glad of that; for you look just like my boy, only you are a girl, and I want you. Come and live with me; be my son, and you shall see my diamond!"

The old man straightened himself up proudly as he spoke. The light of reason for an instant seemed to flash from his eye.

A sudden impulse seized the girl. What prompted it she could not tell.

"Yes," she said, grasping the old man's arm tenderly, "I will go with you—I will be your boy. Come, grandfather, the night is almost passed. Come, let us go."

CHAPTER NINETEEN

THE TWO DETECTIVES

SIMON MUNHALL was at his old occupation of smoking a pipe. As he sat puffing away, the door of the little office was abruptly opened, and the object of his thoughts appeared.

"Talk of the—" began Simon, then, startled, by the man's appearance, he suddenly stopped, and, jumping up, grasped his hand.

"What is the matter?" he cried. "You look as though you had seen a ghost! Has anything happened since I saw you last?"

"Much, friend Simon, much!" replied Dominick, with an effort to appear calm. "My plans just on the eve of success, now threaten total ruin. The time has come when I must demand your promised assistance."

"And you shall have it!" cried Munhall, excitedly, "to the extent of every dollar I am worth, and the last drop of blood in my veins, for I feel that I owe you a reparation which I can never fully make."

"Then listen, for I am about to disclose a secret. But first let me tell you a sad piece of news—Charley Evringham is missing."

"Missing!"

"Yes, abducted—carried off by Marius Burk, assisted, perhaps, by that woman—my wife—although the last I

can hardly believe after her exhibition of affection for him in this very room the other day, and I—I who watched over him—allowed them to do it! I, a detective! Bah! Chief Munhall, you had better take my shield away!"

"We all make mistakes at times," replied Simon, quietly, seeing the man's excitement. "That is sad news, indeed. I knew that he did not come to the house last night, but thought that something had probably detained him in the city. Come, tell me all about it, and whatever mortal man can do to help you or that boy shall be done."

"I will—prepare for a surprise. Simon Munhall, Charley Evringham is my son."

"I knew it! I knew it!" cried Simon, bringing his hand down upon the desk with a loud thump. "I said so from the first moment I saw you. But how did you find it out?"

"It is a long story; but, as I have said, the time has now come when you shall know all. I also suspected something of this kind, at my first meeting with the boy, on that terrible December night in the river. I was amazed and perplexed beyond measure by his astonishing resemblance to myself; he was the living image of what I was at his age, before—before my troubles began. And, as though this were not enough, I met, at the Church of St. Boniface, on Christmas Day, a young girl of just Charley's age, who was his living image—his very double, in fact—whose resemblance to me was in some particulars more startling still. As you know my early history, and the crime for which I was so unjustly imprisoned, I need not rehearse it again; as to what occurred later, I have never spoken. The reason why I could not believe even in the possibility of these young people being my offspring, is simple. I never knew that my wife bore me even one child. I loved that woman, friend Simon, with the intensity peculiar to my race. I thought that my love was returned, and when, two months after my conviction and imprisonment, I received a newspaper containing a notice of her death, I mourned her long and bitterly. For twenty long years I have thought of her only as an angel in heaven—Simon Munhall, during all those long years she was a devil on earth!"

"Courage, my friend! courage!" whispered Simon; "don't let the best or the worst woman on earth make you less of a man!"

"She shall not," replied Dominick, recovering himself with an effort; "but it was nevertheless startling to rescue a woman from that panic at the French ball, as I did her, and to find, on unmasking, in that woman my wife, whom for twenty years I had believed to be dead! It was so to me, but it opened my eyes—opened up a new field of inquiry that I had never dreamed of before. The girl whom I had seen at the church? The boy whom I had rescued from a watery grave? Who were they? My children? I could not doubt it now! I soon found the former to be her daughter, but I questioned Charley closely—no need for Madame Renand to employ me for that purpose —from him I could learn nothing.

"He told me all he knew, however, and I followed up what clues I had, searching and hunting here, there and everywhere. I found living witnesses of the railroad accident in which it was claimed the boy had lost his life. One old man told me of a little black-haired boy whom he saw pulled out from the wrecked car by a man, who, from his description, I instantly recognized as my cousin, Marius Burk, and who was given by him to a rough-looking man, who carried him screaming away. I traced them to New York with the greatest difficulty, for twenty years is a long time for people to remember incidents so trivial, and discovered that he had been carried to a house in Mulberry street, and given in charge of this man's aunt, whose name is Bridget Riley. In this woman I instantly recognized the 'old Bridget' of Charley's younger days.

"I was about to disclose all, as my plans are now almost perfected, when, following up a clue in connection with this Jim Riley, I overheard Marius Burk and the man in whose hands I believe he placed my boy after the railroad accident twenty years ago, plotting against Charley's life. I saw him leave Madame Renaud's, where he has been a frequent visitor of late. I started to follow him, as I had been doing ever since I knew this plot to be under way; but through a piece of insane stupidity, allowed him to double on me. He entered Central Park. I was not long after him, for I found out my mistake almost immediately; but I was too late! They struck the boy on the head with a sand-bag, threw him into a taxi, carried him away, and I was powerless to prevent it."

The detective paused.

"That is all, friend Simon," he said. "Now for action. I want the whole force of this office at my disposal, if necessary, to find that boy."

"You shall have them," replied Simon. "They are yours to command. But what do you think—will they kill him?"

"That is what I fear. The case, you see, stands like this: If I am alive and separated from my wife—which, thank God, I am—I, according to the terms of my father's will, inherit all his estate, the possession of which Burk now enjoys. He was left trustee for my children under that will, and I, on account of his displeasure at my marriage, was cut off. Now, if, as you shrewdly suspect, the body that lay on the bed that terrible morning on the 10th of July, twenty years ago, was one provided by Marius Burk for the purpose—that there was no murder committed at all, and that my father still lives in the person of the ghost of Finnegan's Roost, why then, of course, all this falls to the ground. If such is the case, and he is still living, I am at a loss to understand why he does not come forward and claim his own. I can imagine but one reason—that he is insane."

"I suspect you've hit it," replied Simon, "insane on that one subject—restoring his diamond to the old French kings, who are played out and passed away years ago. But tell me, my friend—that diamond—is it actually of such fabulous value?"

"It was said, at the time that my father received it, to be the largest diamond in the world. As to its value it is impossible for me to say, but it is very great. Now, friend Simon," he continued, "I may as well tell you that I now know you to be correct in your suspicions as to the murder. I've traced the whole matter out. My father never was in that bed—when mad with drugged liquor that fearful trick was played upon me. Marius Burk had secretly removed him to a private asylum the night previous—I have traced the whole thing—the body in the bed was the corpse of a patient who had died in the old New York Hospital on Broadway, the day before. It was provided by the same Jim Riley who abducted my boy, who was an assistant there at the time.

"Of the existence of my father, I think Marius Burk is unaware, for, after having been confined for five years in the asylum to which he was carried, the building was fired by one of its mad inmates, and he, among others, was supposed to have perished in the flames. Thus, Marius Burk believes him dead, and his one hope is to marry my daughter to his drunken son, and by putting my boy to death and killing me, he will inherit all. Such is his plan. Now how to thwart him?"

"It seems to me," said Simon, musingly, "that your

wife—Madame Renaud, I mean—probably has no hand in this."

"She is capable of anything."

"True, but she is a mother. Her desires to learn that boy's past evidently proceeded from her maternal affection, and no matter how wicked she has been, or still is, she evidently possesses that quality to a marked degree. I think you will waste time if you follow up her movements in this matter."

"Then what course do you advise?"

Simon hesitated a moment.

"This Bill Leary," he said at length; "he is a member of that band of ex-convicts who helped in your work at the church-yard of St. Boniface, is he not?"

"He is; they are called the 'Ten Doctors,' and he is known as Doctor No. 4."

"Then, friend Roach," said Simon, proceeding to refill his pipe, "I should advise, as your first move, that you summon their help. 'In a multitude of counselors there is wisdom,' it is said. Place your case in the hands of the Ten Doctors!"

CHAPTER TWENTY

THE MOTHER LOVE

CONTRARY to the advice of Detective Munhall, Dominick resolved to seek out Madame Renaud.

Impressed as he was by the belief that she was the prime mover in all the maze of villainy in which he had been so long entangled he could not help believing that she was at the bottom of Charley's abduction also.

The truth was, Madame Renaud knew nothing whatever of the matter, and he himself was destined to be the first to bear her the news.

He went to the "Newport" apartment-house and rang the Renand bell. A man servant answered it.

"Madame Renaud," said the detective.

"This way, sir," replied the man.

He led the way to madame's apartments and, throwing open the door, ushered him into the parlor which both Charley and Pauline had quitted the night before.

"What name shall I give to madame?" asked the servant as he prepared to leave the room.

The detective had not come unprepared. He was dressed as he had been upon the day on which Madame Renaud had intrusted him with the search.

"Say that Detective Roach has called to render his report," he said.

The man bowed and retired. Five minutes had scarce elapsed when the door was again open, and the lady herself swept into the room. She was attired in a walking costume, being evidently prepared to go out.

"I am very glad you have come, sir," she said with an air of great anxiety, "for I have yet another commission for you this morning. My daughter, of whom I spoke to you the other day, has disappeared, and I am almost frantic lest some terrible fate may have befallen her."

"At what hour did you discover this, madame?"

"Shortly before midnight. I had been entertaining a gentleman in this room, and I have reason to believe that she overheard our conversation, which, to a certain extent, concerned her, and for that reason has fled from the house."

"How old is this young lady, madame?"

"Between nineteen and twenty years, sir. She is the twin sister of the boy, if he is, as I suspect, my son."

The detective remained for a few moments lost in thought.

"Madame," he said presently, "dismiss all doubts from your mind; this boy is your son."

"My son? Are you sure of what you say? Do not deceive me; you little know what hangs upon your words."

"My words are true, Felicie de la Roche!" exclaimed the detective in his natural voice, which until now he had altered. "The boy is your son—and mine!"

With one quick movement of his hand he pulled off his false hair and mustache, and dashed his green spectacles to the floor. The woman gazed at him with staring eyes. Her face assumed a chalky hue.

"What do you want?" she gasped, seizing a chair and steadying herself with one hand upon it. "My life?—which you tried to take from me in the underground vault? I am at your mercy—speak!"

"I do not want your life!" he said sternly. "In a moment of rage I would have killed you, but God mercifully saved me from that crime, if crime it would have been, to kill so vile a thing as you. Give me our child! My boy—the very knowledge of whose existence you have concealed from me all through these long years!"

"I shall not seek to control him now," she slowly replied. "He is yours—take him."

"The boy is gone—stolen—and I believe this to be more of your devilish work! I demand those children!"

Madame Renaud turned even more deathly pale than before.

"Dom," she replied with an effort, "I am wicked, I know, but not as bad as you think. Much as I have wronged you, I would never have harmed so much as one hair on the head of your children. There is some devil's work on foot, but it is not mine—it is that of your cousin, Marius Burk."

"Do you speak the truth?" he demanded.

"I do!" was the firm reply. "You must soon know all, and attempted concealment would be useless. Of Charley—our little Gaspard—I know absolutely nothing, except that he left here last night, alive and well. Marius Burk seeks his life—he rehearsed this whole matter last night in this very room, and it was agreed that Pauline should marry his son. I now believe that she overheard him, for this morning she had fled! Oh, Dom!" she cried, bursting into tears, "I have wronged you—bitterly wronged you, and dare not even ask your forgiveness; but I love my children! Save them, and then deal with me as you will! Save my little boy, who has been so long lost, and I will worship you!"

She fairly groveled at his feet, she wept and she implored, she kissed the very ground on which he stood.

"Rise," he said at length. "For your sake I do nothing. For the sake of our children I would move mountains, were it possible. Our children, I believe, still live. They must and shall be found."

Charley Evringham's recognition of his identity did not appear to surprise Leary in the least.

"So ye remimber me," he said. "Ye always was a smart lad, so ye wur."

"I remember you only too well, for many a beating I've received at your hands."

"Well, so ye did, an' ye desarved them all! Do ye remimber old Bridget?"

"Well!"

"Do ye now? She's dead this three year, God rest her soul!"

"I know ye," continued Bill Leary, "the very first minute I clapped me two eyes on ye. Do ye mind the night you

came here with Doctor 94? Oh, it was the divil's own time ye had been having thin! I knew ye at wanst, and says I to mesilf, says I: 'Bill, me boy, it's a pretty penny ye could turn on that fine lad, if ye so have a mind.'"

Charley, not knowing what to say, remained silent.

"Ye bid fair to stop here a bit!" continued Bill, "so ye had best make yourself at home."

His bonds were then removed, and seeing no opportunity to escape, Charley determined to follow this advice, and throwing himself in one of the bunks which lined the sides of the little cabin, youth soon asserted itself and, despite the perilous situation in which the boy was placed, he fell asleep.

When Charley awoke, daylight filled the little cabin. He looked about, hardly understanding where he was. The sight of the man Mike, however, who was in the act of lighting a fire in the stove, recalled to his mind the events of the past night, and he quickly sprang to his feet.

"Holloa, boy!" exclaimed the man at the stove; "so you've waked up, have you? How do you feel?"

"I feel well enough," replied Charley shortly, "but I want to get out of this place right now."

"I am paid to keep you here, and I shall keep you, and don't you make any blooming error."

Five days dragged out their weary length, and still no help came. Twice they were visited by Bill Leary, who brought with him a little skiff, which was moored under the canal-boat's bow.

"Make one move toward it," said Mike to his prisoner, "and you'll find a bullet in your back before you can count three!"

Under these considerations Charley concluded to leave the boat alone. One morning, about a week after his capture, he arose, and dressing himself, went out on deck, as usual. To his surprise, Mike was nowhere to be seen. He looked over the side of the old canaler, and saw, to his further astonishment, that the skiff, which had been kept securely chained under the bow for the use of that gentleman, had likewise disappeared. The morning passed, the afternoon came and went, but still no one appeared. The shadows of night were just commencing to fall, when Charley, who was seated in the little cabin, was startled by a cry:

"Canal-boat, ahoy!"

He ran to the deck, and looked over the side. A small boat had just made fast.

"Is that you, Mike?" he asked, peering down in the gathering darkness. It was not Mr. Mike. Instead of that distinguished individual, a man apparently of great age stood up in the boat; in the stern-sheets sat a boy.

"Lend us a hand!" cried the latter in a sweet musical voice. "We have come to get you."

Charley stretched out his hand and, grasping that of the speaker, pulled him on deck. He cast one glance at the face of his visitor, and then drew back in amazement. The boy who had come abroad the old canaler was his second self—his very double in every particular.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

WITH HER GRANDFATHER

PAULINE was desperate. Threatened as she was with a forced marriage with a man whom she abhorred, she felt that any fate would be preferable. She had, therefore, determined to accompany the old man to his home, and follow up this strange adventure to the very end. Through many streets they wandered, now turning in this direction and now in that, until at length her guide came to a halt before an old tumble-down frame house, and pointing to the windows above a little store which occupied the first-story, said:

"There, that is where I live. Will you come and be my boy?"

"I will come," replied the girl. "I promised you that before, you know, but why do you call me boy? I am not a boy! Don't you see how I am dressed?"

The old man surveyed her with a bewildered air.

"You are dressed wrong," he said. "All wrong! You have the eyes, you have the hair, you have the features of my boy—my little Dominick, who was taken from me by that bad woman, and yet you are dressed like a girl—tell me, why do you do it?"

"It's all a mistake, grandfather," she said. "Let us go to your home, and I will put on different clothes."

"So you shall—so you shall!" exclaimed the old Frenchman, clapping his hands with all the enjoyment of a child, and leading the way up a flight of narrow stairs, he opened a door and ushered Pauline into his apartment of four rooms, occupying an entire floor. They were filled with a heterogeneous mass of furniture, curiosities, bric-a-brac and old traps of every kind. The fact was, the old man, who unquestionably had in some manner provided himself with means, had long been in the habit of haunting the furniture auction-rooms and buying whatever struck his fancy. He carefully shut and locked the door.

"Come, now, and we'll go to your room. There you will find other clothes. I have been preparing for you a long time. I knew you would come."

They entered a room which was elegantly fitted up with both furniture and men's suits on hooks. There the old man left her to herself.

One, two, three, four, five days passed.

Pauline had grown quite accustomed to her new mode of life. As for old Frenchy, he seemed actually to have grown young again. He laughed and joked and prattled to her like a little child. It was evident that his mind was hopelessly gone, for he talked to her of things that had happened years before as though they had transpired but yesterday.

"I haven't shown you my diamond yet!" he said on the morning of the fifth day, as they sat at breakfast. The one idea! His diamond—always his diamond.

"No; and you promised me you would, you know," replied Pauline, who supposed the diamond to exist only in his imagination, although the allusions she had heard to a diamond in the conversation between Dr. Burk and her mother sometimes puzzled her when she thought of them in connection with the old man's strange rambling talk.

"I will, I will!" he cried, laughing childishly. "To-morrow—not to-day. I always put off showing my diamond until to-morrow, and to-morrow never comes. But look! you shall see this now! Behold something rare—a work of art!"

From some mysterious pocket about his person he produced an article which he held aloft to the gaze of his astonished companion. It was the jeweled collar which had been stolen from her mother's neck on the night of the French ball.

"Where did you get that?" cried the girl.

"Oh, I found it! I found it!" laughed the old man. It is mine; they took it from me with the rest, but I saw it one night at the French ball—I always attend the French ball—on the neck of a masked beauty. Who was she?

Do you know? I didn't, but I took my own! See it sparkle! See it shine!"

As he held it above his head the gems glittered and flashed in the morning sun. At that instant there came a thundering rapping at the door.

"Who is there?" cried the old man, hastily hiding the jeweled collar about his person, and shuffling to the door.

Before he could reach it, however, it was burst violently open, and a man, ragged and dirty and very much intoxicated, staggered into the room.

"Hello; you old guy," he cried in thick drunken tones. "Guess I'm in the wrong pen—I want Bill Leary, I do. Does he live in here?"

"Monsieur Leary lives three doors below," replied the old Frenchman, with some assumption of dignity. "Leave my room at once!"

"Oh, you go to blazes. Good heavens, who is this?"

The man had suddenly straightened up, and with his hands pressed to his head was staring with all his might at Pauline.

"It's my son!" cried the old Frenchman. "Leave my room, I say!"

"Your son! Do you mean to tell me, young man, that I haven't been keeping guard over you on that cursed old canaler down on the Jersey meadows for the last week, in the pay of Billy Leary?"

"I certainly haven't been in any such place," replied Pauline. "Prisoner—canaler? What do you mean?"

"I mean that you are Charley Evringham, that I left a prisoner on the old canal-boat this morning, or else you are his ghost. Though how the deuce you got here is more than I can tell."

"I'm Charley's brother!" she exclaimed, seized with a sudden inspiration. "Tell me, I beg of you, what do you mean?"

The man gazed at her as steadily as his very unsteady condition would permit.

"Say, young feller!" he exclaimed thickly, "if yer Charley Evringham's brother, I'm devilish glad I met you, for I ain't a-goin' to keep that there boy a prisoner down there in the flats no more. He's too nice a lad, and it's too confounded dull; and Bill Leary can just get somebody else. Why that's what I came up for this very mornin'—to tell him that—only you see, I got a little jag on the way."

"Tell me where he is, and how he came there!" said Pauline, trying to appear as friendly as possible, while the old man stood by, not knowing what to make of matters at all.

"Well, I don't mind tellin' Charley's brother," replied the intruder, "although I did promise Bill I'd keep mum, but I want Charley to escape; but only being a broken-down bum, why, I ain't myself got the courage to set him free, for fear of Bill. Don't you tumble? But as for him, why, he's nothin' but an escaped convict, and a damned scoundrel! He keeps some sort of a crib in this street—I thought 'twas here—and he's been hired by some feller to kill Charley!"

After delivering himself thus lucidly, Mr. Mike Brady showed strong symptoms of a desire to lie back in his chair and go to sleep.

"Where is he? Where is he?" cried Pauline, almost betraying herself in her agony, for she now perceived how great Charley's danger really was. "Grandfather, you will help me! We must get him!"

"We must save him! By all means let us get him! Where is he then, Monsieur Mike?"

"Well, bust ahead then," cried Mike sleepily. "If yer goin' inter ther savin' business, yer haven't a moment to lose, for just as soon as I've had a nap I'm going to report to Bill Leary, get my boodle, an' quit, for I don't like the game for a cent; it's too cussedly lonely down there on the flats, with the salt air givin' a feller an appetite like a wolf, and the grub so blame poor. Now I'll tell you what I'll do for you, but—an' I'm givin' it to yer straight, an' I never go back on my friends—you give me ten dollars, an' I'll tell yer where yer brother's hid, and lend you a boat to get him off, an' then get blind drunk, an' I'll promise you not to go near Bill till I'm sober, which might be two or three days, which'll give you all the start you want!"

"Here's the money!" cried Pauline, thrusting a note into his hand without a moment's hesitation; "show us the way!"

Pauline was all attention.

"You just go over the Desbrosses Street Ferry to Jersey City, cross over the heights and go to the edge of the flats, just beyond the end of the Bergen tunnel. Do yer get me?"

"Yes, yes," cried the disguised girl; "I understand."

"Just beyond the watchman's house, right on the edge of the medders, you'll find a boat hidden among the reeds. Take it—that's mine, or rather Bill Leary's—and a deuce of a job you'd have findin' another down there! Now, when you get the boat, just row down the creek until you come to a turn among the reeds leadin' off to your left; follow that, and take the second turn to the right; follow that, and take one more turn to the left, and right before you, if you haven't made no error, you ought to see the blamed old canaler on which your brother's hid, and where, till some one helps him out, he might stay until the Day of Judgment; for, unless he was a fish or a bird, there's no way of gettin' out of that place without a boat."

"Come, grandfather," cried the girl, "let us go!"

"Wish yer luck," said Mike, pocketing his ten dollars. "Give my regards to Charley, an' tell him I wouldn't do him no harm. I'll go now and get a drink. Won't you come and smile?"

Pauline declined, and Mr. Mike staggered off.

Pauline was quick to act.

"Come, grandfather," she cried, "do as I tell you, and to-morrow instead of one boy you shall have two."

"To-morrow—to-morrow!" muttered the old man. "Ay, ay! I'll do what you say, but to-morrow never comes!"

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

THE RETURN OF LEARY

IT was not without difficulty that Pauline put her purpose into execution. The great difficulty lay in keeping the old man to his work. It was impossible to make him comprehend the situation. The sun had already sunk over the Orange Mountains when the little skiff pulled alongside the old canaler.

"Canal-boat, ahoy!" cried old Frenchy, in a deep bass voice.

In response to the cry, a young man appeared on deck.

"Lend us a hand!" exclaimed Pauline, jumping up from her seat in the stern of the boat.

The hand was outstretched, and she stood beside her brother on the deck of the old canaler.

"Don't you know me, Charley?" she cried, as the boy, startled by her appearance, drew back.

"Know you!" he exclaimed. "You ought to be—you can be but one person in the world—Pauline Renaud! But what are you doing here, and in this costume?"

"There is no time for explanations, Charley! I've come to save you—quick—we may be followed even now—there is not a moment to lose!"

"Right ye are, lads!" cried a coarse voice behind them; "ye have no time at all, for Bill Leary's on top of ye now!"

At the same moment another boat pulled alongside, and Leary leaped upon the deck.

Mike had betrayed them.

The ten dollars was soon spent or made way with in some manner, and he had promptly gone to Bill for more, and let the whole thing out.

Both were without arms, and powerless to contend in the matter at all.

"Grandfather! grandfather!" screamed Pauline, rushing to the side of the boat.

The boat and the old man were gone. Some insane idea had possessed him, and he had left them to their fate.

"Well, an' who the deuce are you?" Leary said, as he surveyed the disguised girl closely. You two look as much alike as the Widdy Grady's twins."

"He's my brother!" cried Charley, still standing before her. "If you harm him, it will be over my dead body."

"Will it, me bantam!" cried Bill, with a coarse laugh. "Sorra a brother did you ever have, but ye had a twin sister, and by the same token, I believe this is her masquerading in boy's clothes, so I do. Mike has deserted."

Pauline uttered a scream. "Aha! me beauty!" cried Bill, turning suddenly upon her. "I have ye now!" He seized her in his arm and tried to kiss her.

"Release me!" she cried.

But the cry was needless, for before the ruffian could execute his purpose, Charley Evringham threw himself upon him with all the strength he possessed, and wrenched him away.

"You young whelp!" Leary cried; "do you dare to put yourself agin me? I've spent too much time on ye entirely, but I'll spind no more on either the wan or the other of yez."

Raising his fist he struck Charley a blow which felled him to the deck like a log.

"Lie there!" he said, "till I want ye; and now, girl, boy, or whatever ye are, I'll attind to your case!"

Pauline gazed at him in deadly fear; frantically she rushed from one end of the little deck to the other, screaming for help—for help.

At that moment the sound of oars rang out in the still evening air and then two men leaped upon the deck of the old canaler.

"Surrender, you traitor!" cried the foremost, dashing toward Leary, and pressing a pistol to his head, while the second man supported the fainting form of the disguised Pauline.

"It's Doctor 94!" gasped Leary.

"Is it for this that I have showered down benefits upon you? Is it for this that I gave you my money, rescued you from the vile life you led, and strove to make of you a respectable member of society! Bill Leary, have you forgotten the oath you swore on this very boat—to protect me and mine?"

The trembling Leary answered not a word, but falling to the deck, after the manner of his kind, fairly groveled at the feet of his accuser.

The detective now turned to Pauline, who was leaning upon the arm of her rescuer—no less a person than Detective Munhall.

"Charley!" he exclaimed, holding out both hands. "On that terrible night when you first trod the deck of this old hulk, you asked my name—know me now! I am your father!" and Dominick seized the astonished Pauline, and tenderly embraced her!

"And have you no word for me?" said a voice at his elbow. He turned quickly, and beheld standing quietly behind him the duplicate of what he imagined was his newly-found son. The detective gazed from one to the other in perplexed astonishment, and Charley laughed.

"Father!" he exclaimed, seizing him by the hand, "I am Charley Evringham! I am your son! I felt that we were bound by some hidden tie, from the first moment of our meeting upon that ice-cake in the river." Then turning to Pauline: "This is Pauline Renaud, who, disguised as a boy, came here, and tried to save me."

Pauline stepped quickly to the detective, and grasped his hand. "If not your son," she said, sweetly, "at least the same in affection—your daughter."

Now it was Charley's turn to be surprised.

"Plot and counterplot," cried Simon Munhall, laughing.

"My children—long unknown to me, but not the less dearly loved now that I have found you!" cried the detective, throwing one arm about Charley and the other about Pauline, "I bless heaven for you both. I have been tracking that wretch," he continued, pointing to the prostrate Bill, "for a week, and it was only to-day that my efforts proved successful, and I discovered where my boy was hidden. But it grows late, and we must leave this place, for we have far to go."

On the next day the old canaler which had lain so long aground on the Jersey meadows was gone—gone no one could tell where, for the tide rose unusually high that night, and she floated away. Three months later her old hulk was found sunken at the mouth of one of the water ways leading out of Newark Bay. Lest she should prove an obstruction to navigation, they raised her, and found to their astonishment her sides bored with many auger holes, while in her little cabin was the body of a man. It was destitute of clothing, but around the heart was bound with strong cords a piece of black cloth, upon which were these words: "Doctor No. 4!" It was Leary.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

CONCLUSION

UPON the same night, just after the sounding of the midnight hour, a disguised and muffled figure might have once more been seen stealing across the open ground which lay between the old brewery and the rear of Finnegan's Roost. It was Dr. Marius Burk.

He seeks the now sole object of his thoughts—the great diamond of the Bourbon crown. His last theory as to the place of its hiding is a good one. It is based on the occurrences of his previous visit. The ghost of Finnegan's Roost! It was old Dominique de la Roche, of course, whom he had until that night believed to have fallen a victim to the flames which years before had consumed the private asylum in which he had caused him to be confined.

Stripped of all its supernatural surroundings, partly the result of their own imagination and partly of skillfully prepared mechanical contrivances on the part of the old man, the wonderful appearance seen by himself and his companion in the underground vault beneath the old house meant simply this: There was still another secret chamber beneath the first. From thence the old Frenchman had ascended—there the diamond was doubtless concealed. Still possessing the key of the Roost, he opened the door and silently entered. He was heavily armed.

"It will go hard with him who interferes with my plans to-night," he muttered, "be he man or be he devil!"

Down the cellar stairs he went; the trap-door was raised in a moment, and the midnight intruder descended to the vaults. He was provided with a dark-lantern, as before, and in addition he carried a heavy iron bar. The point at which the old man had appeared he remembered distinctly. Toward that point he now turned.

Setting the lantern on the stone floor he stooped and carefully examined its surface. A narrow slit, square in form, betrayed the existence of a trap-door leading to still further vaults below. Seizing the cross-bar he quickly, by several powerful blows, enlarged the opening, and endeavored to pry up the stone. It would not move. Again and again he tried, bearing upon the bar with all his strength. This time his efforts were crowned with success—the stone slowly moved in its place.

The man had tried to pry the trap up—the great stone was moving down. He stepped quickly backward and grasped his revolver, and held it ready cocked in his hand. Lower and lower sank the stone, disclosing a deep, dark opening.

Cautiously Dr. Burk drew near the edge and peered down into the darkness. He could see nothing—hear nothing—the silence of death reigned in those depths as it did in the vault in which he stood. Had he touched the secret spring, thus causing the trap to descend?

He seized the lantern and held it down into the opening. A narrow flight of steps met his gaze. Without a moment's hesitation he descended. Down, down he went, until it seemed as though he would reach the very bowels of the earth. Suddenly he felt in the darkness a hand laid upon his shoulder.

"Stop!" cried a deep voice in his ear, "what do you seek?"

At that instant the darkness was illuminated by an unearthly light; he turned and beheld the specter of the previous visit at his side. It was the ghost of Finnegan's Roost!

"The diamond!" cried Burk, recovering himself in an instant, and holding the revolver at the head of the object before him. "The diamond! the diamond! produce it—give it to me, be you man, be you devil!"

"Look!" cried the old man calmly, "look! It stands before you, go and take it!"

He pointed out toward the right with his long wrinkled forefinger, and slowly waved his hand. There, not five feet away, apparently within a square cavity cut in the stone floor, lay the object of the man's long search, the Bhrampoor of Kalaghaat, reposing in a casket of solid gold.

"Take it, Marius Burk!" cried the old man; "for it you would have killed me; for it you would have made me a maniac; destroyed my household; blighted my life! Now it is yours—take it and begone!"

He laughed a wild, unearthly laugh, which made the walls of stone ring again. Marius Burk gazed upon the diamond with gleaming eyes. At last it was his—at last the end of his long search was at hand. Some horrible fascination seemed to draw him nearer. He leaned forward to grasp it in his hand.

Crash! Bang! From the vaulted roof above a heavy stone had fallen, propelled downward by a secret lever touched by the old man's hand. It lay at the Frenchman's feet; from beneath its crushing bulk a man's head and one arm protruded.

"Row, my friends, row!" cried Dominick, as the boats in which were seated himself, his children, Simon Munhall and the police who were with him spun swiftly up the creek. The men obeyed with a will.

"But my grandfather—your father!" exclaimed Pauline, turning to her rescuer and newly-found parent, "shall we leave him? Where can he have gone?"

"Which direction did his boat take?" asked the detective.

"I do not know. He disappeared the instant Leary came—rowed off without a word."

"We cannot find him now," said Simon Munhall. "He will probably turn up all right, as he is well used to taking care of himself. But how came you in his company, and in this disguise?" he continued, addressing Pauline.

The young girl related her adventures from the moment Charley had left her until the present time.

They rowed on in silence, and at length reached the point under the Jersey Heights from which the detective had embarked. From thence they proceeded to New York to the house in which Dominick resided. It was deemed best that Pauline should retain her disguise for a short time, until her father could ascertain how matters stood with the enemies who had so long pursued him.

First of all, it was determined to visit the apartments in which Pauline had lately lived, and find, if possible, the old Frenchman.

They hurried to the old Frenchman's apartments. They were deserted. Since the morning before, when he had left them in company with his boy companion, he had been seen by no one. They devoted the day to their search, returning to Jersey and hunting there, looking and inquiring everywhere, but all to no purpose. He could not be found.

"I'm sure he'll turn up all right," said Simon Munhall. "He's been in the habit of roaming around everywhere. I have known him by sight as a common wanderer in the streets at night for years. He'll turn up again, you may depend."

Dominick did not feel so certain, and it was with great reluctance that the worthy Simon persuaded him to retire and resume his search the following day. In bed the man could not sleep. If he dozed off, even for a moment, he was visited by fearful dreams. It seemed as though his father was calling him—as though he demanded his presence at his side. He resolved to get up and go out and resume his search. If the old man moved about mostly at night, in the night was the time to find him. Hastily putting on his clothes he descended the stairs, leaving Charley and Pauline in their beds behind him, and gained the street. The night was dark and starless; there were evidences of a gathering storm. He hardly knew where to begin, until he remembered Finnegan's Roost.

The last time he had seen his father was within the walls of that old house, enacting his rôle of ghost. There, then, would he begin his search now, and towards Finnegan's Roost he bent his steps. He reached the old brewery in due time, and let himself silently in through the little door. Passing through the deserted building, carefully groping his way, he emerged into the garden beyond. He moved across the garden toward the door, when suddenly there burst upon his ears a fearful sound. A ripping, tearing sound! It seemed to shake the very earth beneath his feet. A blaze of light shot out of the windows of the old house, and in an instant a terrible explosion rent the air, and Finnegan's Roost lay before him a heap of shattered ruins.

The interval between the first sound and the explosion was but an instant of time, but during that instant the form of the old Frenchman dashed from its open door

toward him. He raised his eyes to heaven. He waved his hand aloft.

"Done at last!" he cried. "I die in peace! My work is done!" and he fell lifeless at the feet of his son.

Madame Renaud had vanished and, for the sake of his children, Dominick deemed it wiser to deliver himself up to the proper authorities and make matters the subject of the fullest possible investigation. The result was his triumphant acquittal. His one regret was his father—for the old Frenchman was really dead, although there was no appearance of any wound found upon his body, nor could any other cause be assigned than heart disease, brought on by undue excitement.

He had evidently blown up the old house in pursuance of some preconceived mad fancy, there being found in the cellar every evidence that such was the case. The passages leading to the vaults were all open, and in the lower one all that remained of Marius Burk was found. They removed the great stone with difficulty, and gave the body a Christian burial.

And now, what became of the great diamond? That is a mystery which was never solved! Certain it is, that it was not found beneath the great stone, as both Dominick and Simon Munhall were present when that was raised. Whether the old man had some secret means of withdrawing the gold casket, and before touching the fatal match, hid it elsewhere, or whether, at the moment of the explosion, the rock beneath opened and swallowed it up, is something that will never be known.

MYSTERY OF LAKE BAIKAL

AMERICAN railroad engineers, who will doubtless come to Siberia in large numbers in connection with the reorganization of the Trans-Siberian Railway, will have much to do with the region of the famous Lake Baikal, which is skirted on the south and northeast by the great Russian railroad. It is possible in the winter months to cross the lake on sleds, thus varying the monotony of the long journey, and in summer by embarking on a steamer. But the builders of the railroad found it desirable to have a safe, all-rail passage to Vladivostok, so the way was hewed through ranges of hills. The tunnels are now guarded by Japanese troops.

Baikal, which is one of the largest fresh water lakes in the world, is called "The Holy Sea" by the Russians who live in its vicinity. It is only exceeded in size by the American Lakes Superior, Michigan and Huron and by Lake Nyanza in Africa. In contour it resembles the human heart. It attains at certain points the great depth of 3,185 feet.

A number of islands may be seen as one crosses the water in the navigable season. The Buriats, descendants of the Mongolians, who are found numerously in the Baikal region, have a superstitious reverence for the island of Olkhon as being the residence of the infernal divinity, Begdozy, who is supposed to have under his care the souls of the damned. The scientist, Gheorghii, who visited the island in 1722, declared that at no place in the then known world were so many sacrifices made as on this island. According to another Mongolian tradition, Olkhon was the domain and home of the ancient hero, Genghis-Khan.

Americans who have seen the rocky human profile in the White Mountains of New Hampshire, would be interested in the spectacle on the eastern shore of the lake, to the north of Cape Holy, where the summit of a perpendicular column of jagged rock resembles the colossal head of a man, with a long nose, and with the eyes represented by profound and somber cavities. In the crevasse which makes the mouth flocks of cormorants build their nests.

TAKE NOTICE!

The feature stories that have been published in this magazine are well worth reading, if you have not already seen them. The list is as follows:

No.
1 THE EEL MAN, by Robert Carlton Brown
2 ZITANA OF MAISON ROUGE, by F. W. Doughty
3 THE MYSTERIOUS WEB, by Armstrong Perry
4 UNDER THE HYPNOTIC SPELL, by Dr. H. Enton
5 THE SILKEN SHEATH, by Crittenden Marriott
6 A FORTUNE TELLER'S SECRET, by Gladys Hall
7 THE MYSTIC EMBLEM, by Marie Coolidge Rask
8 THE CARDS OF FATE, by William Goode
9 MR. BACHELLER'S APARTMENTS, By William Hamilton Osborne
10 THE INNER WHEEL, by Octavius Roy Cohen
11 THE VOICE OF THE VALLEY, by Robt. C. Brown
12 THE SIGN OF THE SEVEN SHARKS, By Charles F. Oursler
13 UNDER A MASK, by Critenden Marriott
14 CASE 4,444, by Gladys Hall
15 AFTER A MILLION, by Police Captain Howard
16 SHADOWING THE BLUE TRIANGLE, By Charles F. Oursler
17 THE CASE OF CAPTAIN FORTESQUE, by R. Ingalls
18 THE BIRD-HEADED SPHINX, by Edith S. Tupper
19 A DOUBLE MYSTERY, by Dr. Harry Enton
20 THE MAGICIAN DETECTIVE, by C. F. Oursler

No.
21 KING COBRA MYSTERY, by George Gilbert
22 THE HAUNTED CORRIDORS, by Wm. H. Osborne
23 NO MAN'S MAN, by Maxwell Smith
24 THE TREVOR PUZZLE, by T. C. Harbaugh.
25 THE TRAIL OF ROSES, by Edmund Condon.
26 THE HINDOO VANISHING CLUE, By Pauline Carrington Bouve
27 WHO WAS GUILTY? by Beulah Poynter
28 THE EVIL EYE, by Chas. F. Oursler
29 THE THIRTEENTH DOOR, by Edith Sessions Tupper
30 THE GAME OF DETECTIVE CAREW, By Leonard Jerome
31 LAW-MAKER AND LAW-BREAKER, By Beulah Poynter
32 THE COUNTERFEIT HEIRESS, By Inspector John Harrigan
33 TRACKED TO CHINA, by Chief Roger O'Brien
34 AFTER THE GERMAN SPIES, by May Halsey Miller
35 THE CLUE IN THE BOX, by Alexander Douglas
36 TRAILED BY A FRENCH DETECTIVE, By Rene Renaud
37 A DROP OF INK, by Lieutenant Robert W. Warden

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HOW THE OLD HOMESTEAD WAS SAVED

By MONROE H. ROSENFELD

"YOU abominable wretch! There isn't a manly hair in your head! Look at me! Look at me! Here I am in tatters, with scarce a stitch upon my back, with nothing to eat in the house and with not a blanket to cover up your children with! Gaze upon those poor, hungry cadaverous-looking things—clotheless, starving, friendless! Wretch that you are! Gambler!"

The little woman threw her head into her hands and wept violently.

Colonel Sprinn—for he was universally known as "Col." —sat with dejected head upon his hands and uttered not a word.

Haven't you anything to say?" shrieked his wife, thoroughly maddened by his silence. "You ought to be arrested!"

He looked up meekly at her and sighed:

"What have I done, dear?"

"What have you done? What haven't you done!" screamed the irate woman, now beside herself with anger. "You have taken all my jewelry; you have mortgaged the mirrors; borrowed money on my piano; sold the bedclothes; begged, coaxed and sponged from every one under the sun; lied and humbled yourself, even to your enemies; tricked your relatives and every friend; and actually taken the baby-carriage to raise a few paltry dollars wherewith to satisfy your miserable appetite for gambling. And you sit there and ask me what you have done! Where were you last night—all night?" she screamed.

"It was only a little friendly game, dear."

"'Friendly'! did you say? Ha, ha!" she fairly yelled with the delirium of a maniac. "'Friendly! friendly'! did you say! Do friends rob! Do friends send you home early in the morning, haggard, hungry and broke! Friends indeed! Miserable wretch!

He attempted to expostulate. "I——"

"Don't you dare to give me any excuses! Go away; get out of my sight; drop into the river; stop breathing! Oh, upon my bended knees I beg you to go away and die! I am so miserable with you!"

Once more the frail little woman burst into a paroxysm of tears. A little warm baby hand stole into her own as her arm hung listlessly at her side. A soft gentle voice said:

"Mamma, don't be so cross. Papa is so poor, and I is so hungry."

"Yes," chirruped another, the second of her offspring, a pretty little girl-tot, who cuddled up to the distressed woman and whispered: "Yes, and the rent-man was here again to-day, mamma, for the fourth time this week. And, oh, he swore so many bad oaths, and said that he would put all the things out on the sidewalk to-morrow sure, if papa didn't pay the money. And I'm sure he meant it, too, for he had a look in his eyes like a man who was about to commit some awful crime!"

The colonel rose in anger. He was a majestic-looking man as he stood there with all the grace and bearing of a soldier. Despite his fifty years of adversities, generated by his innate love for the fluttering pasteboards, he still possessed the exterior of a dignified gentleman, who is always ready to stand "so much and no more." The very thought that his children should suffer by any admission of his self-inflicted poverty and disgrace touched his heart.

"I will see that you have plenty of money to-night, Molly," he said slowly and calmly.

He darted toward the lounge where lay his hat. Then a thought flashed upon him. It paled him like a ghost.

"Where—where will I get the stake to win it with!" he muttered. By heavens, I must have at least enough to buy a stake. What can I do; what can I do!" he groaned. "Everything is in pawn except my dress-suit. Surely I must wear that, if I expect to be admitted into the club."

A tear was almost in his eye. With manly dignity he checked the evidence of his grief. "Shall I humble myself to her?" he murmured. Then, with a heroic impulse born of desperation, he drew his wife to him, threw his arms about her and pressed her head to his breast.

"Molly, dear; once more—this last time—I want to ask a favor of you. I know it's a shameful thing to do—but——"

With all a woman's gentleness, with all the instinct of woman's pity and love, Molly looked forgivingly into his sorrowful face.

"Well, what do you want me to do?" she asked sorrowfully.

"My darling—must I ask it—how can I—how—oh! that I should ever expect such a thing—your—your wedding-dress—you do not use that now, love——"

He expected a scream of anger, perhaps a blow.

Instead, with all the fountain of her noble woman-soul over-welling with that pity which is born from the purest love and a blind obedience to its impulses, the little woman walked slowly to the lone wardrobe which stood in the corner of the carpetless bed-room, unlocked the lid of a dust-covered trunk beside it, which had perhaps not been opened for years, and lifted out a heavily-freighted mass of silk and velvet. She shook out the folds of the garment, hung it across her arm and then handed it to him. The odor of orange-blossoms filled the air.

"Take it, Henry, and may you have good-luck." She turned her head, and a tear fell upon his outstretched hand.

"Molly Sprinn was an odd woman. No one but her immediate friends knew much about her. She came from parents who stood high in the community, who had reared their daughter in the paths of rectitude and propriety. In fact, it was said that they were a little over-zealous in their creed and beliefs of righteousness, and that this sense of Puritanism at times also crept to the fore in the daughter's mode of life. Some folks thought that Mrs. Sprinn's ideas about her husband's gambling habits were hereditary, and her more righteous neighbors loved her the better for her domestic strifes with him which, they asserted, were those of a Christian who battled to save a sinner from ultimate perdition. Others, while lauding her fervent efforts to reform her husband, thought she overdid her duty. What need that she should worry about

him when she knew nothing could check his incurable disease—a love of cards?

There were a few, too, who were so uncharitable as to believe that most of her tirades and attacks upon her husband were superficial, and that at heart she loved to see him gamble when he was so lucky as to win and bring home his gains, which he invariably did when fortune attended his exploits, as sometimes was the case.

Be this as it may, Mrs. Sprinn was at heart a good woman, though at times a very mysterious person. She belonged to a Woman's League, at which she was an earnest and regular attendant. She would frequently go out of an evening and remain away from her home and children for hours at a time. In fact, twice a week she was a punctual visitor to the rooms of the Missionary League of the Knights of Womanhood. Yet were not her visits those of a philanthropist? Did she not take her needle and her basket with her on each occasion, and were not her poor fingers calloused at their tip-ends with the hard industry of her arduous toiling?

Thus it came to pass that on the evening of her husband's departure to his club, Mrs. Sprinn also betook herself, *via* the subway, to her "missionary" work. And there, behind closed doors, in the companionable society of her philanthropic sisters, she remained, enwrapt perhaps, in her noble plans of charity, while at the club her wayward spouse wasted the substance of his life in riotous wooing of Mammon, and at home her little children slept the virtuous slumbers of innocence with a sweet confidence in their mother's self-sacrifice for the benefit of her fellow men and sisters.

It was daybreak of a beautiful May morning. Wearily through the streets of the great city from an uptown club a tall, soldierly-looking man was wending his way to his home on the east side of town. It was Colonel Sprinn. His face bespoke his heart. He had gone to the club in a taxi, but now he was footing it home. There was no need to ask how he had fared. His step was uncertain—but not from drink nor from old age. Occasionally he would pause before one of the great jewelry windows that lined Broadway, near the uptown theaters.

"Now by all that is sacred," he muttered, "what have I done that I should have such luck! Surely I have committed no crime in my day." His words would have touched a heart of adamant had they not been mingled in the next sentence with the ludicrous.

"All—all night, and every hand beaten! Chipped away two stacks before I had an 'opener.' Five full-hands beaten, and four of a kind pat twice and not a call. Then a misdeal when I had a pat flush and Barney and the doctor both started to raise. By the gods, what a play I'd of had! And now—why, I haven't even a dime for bromo." He fumbled in his pockets nervously. "God! what'll the old woman say! And to-day that dod-blasted rent-man's coming to throw us out!" He drew a cigarette-wrapper from his vest-pocket and started to roll a "consolation."

"As he did so and turned the corner of the street to his abode he saw one of his little children come running breathlessly towards him.

"Papa, papa, papa!" she was crying excitedly; "hurry home! That man with the awful eyes is upstairs and tying the tables and chairs together, and he has already put some of them out on he sidewalk!"

"By heavens!" exclaimed the colonel, ghastly with pallor, "they are dispossessing us! Where is your mother, child?"

"Oh, papa, mamma didn't come home at all last night."

"What!" roared the colonel. "Tell me quick—where did your mother go?"

Thoughts of his wife's infidelity—the consciousness that, perhaps, driven at last like an animal at bay to the final leap of destruction she, too, had left him and her home forever—choked him. He gurgled like a suffocating hound. He fairly sunk his fingers in his little daughter's thin arm.

"Where did your mother go, child; tell me quick!" he hissed.

"I don't know, papa. Perhaps she went to the Missionary League. She took her needles and basket with her."

Tearing across the street, up three steps at a time, he rapped at the woman's entrance of the league. There was a babel of voices inside, and four mouths responded simultaneously: "Come in."

He pushed the door in frantically. There sat his wife surrounded by six other women. A stack of ivories of every color, denomination and value were piled before her. Dumb-stricken for an instant, he fell back appalled. Speechless in awe and wonderment, without even a chance to think or to further marvel, he threw himself upon his knees by her side and cried, with arms extended to the table before her:

"For heaven's sake, Molly, my darling. God bless you—cash in your chips quick and get the money. The sheriff is throwing our things into the street!"

A mystifying detective story will be the big feature of our next number. Don't miss it.

INCOME TAX EXCEEDS THIS PEER'S INCOME

THAT a man should pay more money for income tax than the total of his income seems the limit of taxation. This is said to be the plight of a well-known British peer who was born an American and became naturalized in England some years ago. His property is in the United States.

Being a British subject, he is compelled by British law to pay income tax on all his revenues from all sources, and the American law compels payment of income tax on all his income from American property. Being a multimillionaire, his income is subject to heavy supertax by both governments, and the two taxes are said to amount to more than 100 per cent. of the income. Thus the unfortunate nobleman must pay out all of his receipts and dip into his capital to defray current taxes, and, after defraying this first charge, use more of the capital for living expenses.

The double income tax of the war period has hit well-to-do Americans who live in Great Britain very hard. In former days very few of the large colony of American business men living in Britain ever gave up their American citizenship. But many of them have found this draft on their patriotism too heavy and have reluctantly changed their allegiance and taken out naturalization papers.

As for those Americans who lived here because they found the social atmosphere of England more congenial, and the scope for spending money on pleasures greater than at home, most of them seem to have disappeared.

THE LADIES' ORGANIZATION

By LAURANA W. SHELDON

PART THREE

MRS. OGDEN and Mrs. Waldemar came up the street, arm in arm, and chattering like the best of comrades on the evening of the game at Mrs. Hamilton's. They had not been very good friends of late, but their differences had all been forgotten over the grave of Mrs. Waldemar's very obese and ancient poodle, and the "one touch of nature that makes the whole world kin" had effected the firmest kind of (feminine) friendship. They had just seen their neighbor, Miss Nelson, "scorching" by in her car, and both ladies were giving vent to their opinions as to her appearance in almost one and the same ejaculations.

"Mercy! How indecent!" said Mrs. Ogden.

"Horrors! How vulgar!" echoed her companion. "Who would think that a lady, and especially a maiden lady, would make such a show of herself as that!"

"It is positively dreadful! I wonder that the minister's wife doesn't give her a serious talking to on the subject! See, here she comes back with her coat-tails flying like windmills! I've a good mind not to speak to her! Is she going to stop? Yes—— Why, my dear Miss Nelson, how beautifully you do ride! Mrs. Waldemar and I have been admiring you for several moments!"

Miss Nelson blushed profusely as she alighted from her flivver. "That old cat, the minister's wife, just told me that I looked like a fright," she said angrily. "But that is what one may expect when they ride (to speak figuratively) in advance of the ignorant populace!"

She sighed with martyr-like resignation as she joined them and then, walking with a half stoop so that her coat would seem as long as possible, she climbed the steps and entered the presence of her hostess. The other guests were all on time, so they at once began preparations for the evening's pastime. Mrs. Hamilton had provided a bit of refreshment for the occasion, but the ladies were all a trifle shocked when they found that it consisted of crackers and cheese and beer.

"That is what they have at all the gentlemen's organizations," the hostess explained eagerly. "I asked Michel (my French cook) and he assured me that beer was quite the appropriate beverage."

Mrs. Waldemar made very wry faces when she first tasted it, but upon Miss Spencer's suggestion that this was a good opportunity to practise "repose of feature" she whipped out her omnipresent hand mirror and succeeded in finishing her glass without a single contortion. In fact she took to the beverage so kindly that Mrs. Hamilton had to replenish her glass, and the benign expression that accompanied each swallow was plainly indicative of her successful self-control, or something else much less to her credit.

"Do let me deal!" she pleaded as Mrs. Hamilton produced the cards when they were all seated at the table. "I like to deal; it is such excellent practise for the fingers," she giggled good-naturedly.

"And such a good opportunity to show off your diamond rings," Mrs. Ogden muttered to Miss Spencer, *soto voce.*

"Dear me, Mrs. Waldemar, don't make them scatter so!" Miss Nelson exclaimed as she got down on the floor for the fourth time to pick up the bits of pasteboard.

"You have only given me two and Mrs. Ebenezer Deering has six!" poor, deaf Mrs. Owen piped out shrilly.

It was such a surprise to hear quiet Mrs. Owen speak, that for a moment Mrs. Waldemar stopped shuffling and gazed at her intently. Then she reached over for her glass of beer which Mrs. Hamilton had just refilled, and in trying to balance the glass between her fingers and deal four more cards from the pack to Mrs. Owen at the same time, she became slightly confused and dropped more cards upon the carpet.

Immediately Mrs. Owen's politeness got the better of her prudence. She bent over to pick up the cards with the ear trumpet still held in active position, and of course Mrs. Waldemar upset the beer into the funnel of the trumpet, and with a gurgling shriek Mrs. Owen fell to the floor, with small streams of beer wending their way up through the roots of her hair, down the neck of her dress and slant-wise across her chin and the immaculate whiteness of her collar.

And just at this moment of wild excitement the front door bell was heard to vibrate noisily.

"Goodness gracious! What is that?" screamed Mrs. Hamilton hysterically.

"Murder! Help!" groaned Mrs. Owen, as some beer froth crossed her nostrils and almost choked her.

Mrs. Ebenezer Deering dropped the box of chips on the table with a fearful clatter and rushed to her rescue. Miss Spencer began lustily calling for order, and Miss Nelson, who was peering out of the front window, came bark on tiptoe, her eyes actually twice their size from horror, and assured them, with bated breath, that it was the minister's wife who was demanding admittance.

For once the combined instincts of woman and hostess saved them. Mrs. Hamilton rose from the chair as pale and determined as the spectre of vengeance, and with a sudden gathering together of her mental and physical powers she swept from the room to admit her caller.

When the door had closed upon her the ladies carefully assisted Mrs. Owen to rise and, enjoining her to silence by means of sundry signs and symbols, they siphoned the remainder of the deluge from her ear with the corner of a linen handkerchief.

It was not so easy a matter to repress the volubility of Mrs. Waldemar. The two unaccustomed glasses of beer had loosened her tongue and destroyed all traces of her natural irritability. In fact she was fairly beaming with cordiality, so much so that she quite insisted on going into the parlor and inviting the "dear minister's wife to come and join them in a game of poker."

The combined influence of the other three ladies (Mrs. Owen was only half resuscitated and didn't count) eventually succeeded in stilling her tongue so that they could accomplish their great desire, that of hearing what the visitor in the parlor was saying. It was a painful silence at first, one in which they could almost feel their hearts creeping slowly up through their embroidered collars, but at last Mrs. Hamilton's voice was heard and they were fairly astounded at her wonderful coolness.

"Why, my dear madam, I can hardly believe that you would credit such a story! I allow a poker game in my house, why, I hardly know the value of one playing card from another!"

There was a trifling silence—a calm that lasted perhaps a minute, and then the minister's wife emitted a gentle cough, so gentle that the ladies could hardly hear it.

"If you do not play the game, my dear Mrs. Hamilton," she said in chilling accents, "pray tell me why you are clutching those five very excellent cards in your left hand at the present moment?"

Instinctively the three listening ladies turned their eyes in the direction of the table. Sure enough, Mrs. Hamilton had been holding her hand of cards, and in that awful moment of resolve, when she had gone forward to face her foe, she had unknowingly carried the whole five with her.

A moment later Mrs. Waldemar broke the awful silence by letting forth an immoderate giggle. A fly had lighted on the edge of her glass that to all appearances was already much the worse for imbibing, and in her present good-natured condition she could not help being amused at its curious antics.

The reappearance of Mrs. Hamilton, pale and trembling, from the parlor, was the only thing that restored her dignity.

Mrs. Hamilton said nothing at first, she couldn't, her feelings were too badly harrowed, but she began shuffling the cards with violent zeal and the ladies, imitating her example, dropped quietly into their former positions.

"Did she have on that same old green silk dress?" Mrs. Ogden asked in a cautious manner.

"Yes, and it was greener than ever!" Mrs. Hamilton snapped in a blaze of anger. "And she had on her last year's bonnet and russet shoes and a pair of her husband's gloves!" she added.

"And to think of her talking propriety to us!" said Mrs. Ebenezer Deering indignantly.

"She said I looked like a 'fright' in an auto!" spoke up Miss Nelson. "I move, ladies, that we start a fund and buy the old thing a full-length mirror!"

Miss Nelson's sarcasm was highly applauded, but by this time the cards were dealt and things were all ready for the evening's diversion.

"Can't we make it a fifty-cent limit?" asked Mrs. Hamilton anxiously.

"Mercy, no! We wouldn't have money enough for soda water to-morrow! Twenty-five cents is quite enough!" Miss Deering insisted. "Why, we could lose two dollars on a twenty-five cent limit!"

"Well, then, let's all put in two dollars. It will be so much more interesting!" urged Mrs. Hamilton.

"And have my husband asking me to-morrow what has become of all my house money—no, indeed!" said Mrs. Ogden.

"Heavens! I wouldn't be married for anything! It must be awful!" gasped Miss Nelson.

"By the way, cook says that where there is beer there is always a 'Kitty'! suggested Mrs. Hamilton blandly.

"Now, what on earth is a 'Kitty,' I'd like to know?" said Mrs. Ebenezer Deering.

"Well, I never!" said Mrs. Ogden, who was better posted. Then she turned to Miss Spencer and whispered softly behind her cards, "Now that she's bought the beer, I really believe she expects some one else to pay for it! Did you ever hear of anything so stingy!"

"Certainly, let's have Kitty buy the beer!" chimed in Mrs. Waldemar enthusiastically. She hadn't the remotest conception of who or what the "Kitty" was, but if it was necessary in order to procure the refreshments, why she, for one, was decidedly in favor of having it.

At last the game was started, and for nearly five minutes not one of the ladies spoke a word. It was evident that the minister's wife's visit had cast some sort of a spell upon them.

"I never did like that woman or her son either, for that matter!" said Mrs. Owens after she had recklessly bet fifty cents on a pair of sevens and her pile of chips was reduced to one red and two blue ones.

"There's nothing the matter with her son, I can tell you!" Miss Spencer spoke up so sharply that all the ladies stopped playing at once and promptly raised their eyes to gaze at her. "He's not a bit like his mother, and he drives a car like a De Palma!" she finished bravely.

"Pooh! With that hump in his back?" retorted Miss Nelson. "I'll bet fifty cents I could beat him on a ten-mile run! No, Mrs. Deering, I won't raise you another cent; I'm absolutely certain that you are bluffing!"

Instantly all glances were turned scrutinizingly upon Mrs. Deering's face. They wished to study her expression if it was true that she was really bluffing.

"I'm not bluffing a bit!" she assured them promptly. "I'm just betting so that there will be a big pile, and I'm sure I'll scare you all out before very long, and then for once I'll be the winner!"

"You can have it for all of me!" Mrs. Ogden said dubiously. "I've only got three jacks and somehow I don't feel much like playing this evening."

"Mine ain't as good as that, so I guess I'll give up before I break that second dollar," Miss Spencer echoed discreetly.

"I don't seem to have any more chips, so I guess I'll stop!" piped Mrs. Owen, whereupon both of the other ladies insisted in bestowing theirs upon her.

Mrs. Hamilton had been growing more and more nervous ever since her contact with the minister's wife, so as she had nothing in her hand she also withdrew and went over and peered anxiously out of the window.

For a few moments Mrs. Deering and Miss Nelson raised each other with alarming recklessness, but at the last moment Mrs. Deering weakened and gave up the fight, so Miss Nelson was declared the winner. No one thought to look at their cards, so for once there was no bitter feeling.

"Ladies!" said Mrs. Hamilton gravely, as she returned at last from her scrutiny at the window. "There has something come to me just now that I am going to communicate at once to the husband of that horrid woman!"

As the ladies all crowded around her in great eagerness, she hurriedly repeated her recent conversation in the parlor, and then lowering her voice to a sepulchral whisper she questioned fiercely:

"How did the minister's wife know those were 'five excellent cards' if she is not familiar with the game of poker?"

"The hypocrite!" sneered Mrs. Owen. "But had she caught us we would have been exposed and disgraced by being called gamblers. Anyhow, I don't care for cards, so I'm going to give up trying to learn a man's game."

The rest assured her that they shared her sentiments, and it was then moved and acceded that the organization disband. And when they started for home in pairs each couple was confidentially knocking the others.

(*The end.*)

A remarkable collection of interesting stories is being prepared for our next number. If you want good reading matter, do not overlook this treat. Most of them are detective stories by good authors.

STORIES OF GREAT DETECTIVES

BY A NEW YORK JOURNALIST

The writer has had occasion professionally to learn a great deal about the real detectives. He has talked with them, corresponded with them, heard the narrative of their lives and exploits, and enjoyed in reality all the interest and excitement connected with these men that is constantly presented in the fiction of the day.

For the benefit of the thousands of readers of "Mystery Magazine," we propose to relate some of our experiences, and give a rapid glance at the most noted men in the different cities of the United States. The number of professional detectives is now very large. They are employed in every branch of the United States Government; all the great cities have a trained force, and the private agencies are to be found in all the cities, with correspondents throughout the civilized world. Our "Stories of Great Detectives" give, perhaps, the first familiar relation ever attempted of the characteristics of the great detectives who have made the detection of crime a new science.

CHARLES F. MILLER

PROBABLY no detective in this country had a more startling array of exploits than Charles F. Miller, of Philadelphia, Pa. For six years he was the district attorney of that city and county.

"I have been connected with and worked up over two hundred murder cases," he wrote in a letter before us.

The fact cannot be disputed that he was a wonderful man in the class of cases which required the shrewdness, cunning and daring which are necessary to unravel mysterious crimes.

Cool as a cucumber at all times; seeing everything and everybody; noticing the little things as well as the great things; going down into cellars and corners, and into the secret chambers of the human heart—doing all this, and more, in his own calm, cautious, cunning way. Charles F. Miller, when a public officer, was a man so much felt in the community of Philadelphia, that no doubt the fact that he was connected with the district attorney's office prevented men from committing murder and other crimes.

The reader will appreciate the following facts, given in his own words:

"The case which created considerable excitement was my arresting a gang of celebrated thieves, known as the 'Forty Thieves.'"

"These thieves, sixteen in number, occupied a cave on the Junction Railroad, on the outskirts of the city. They were outlawed, and had with them a woman known as the 'Sheba Queen,' who was the daughter of a clergyman.

"They worked at night, and the manner of working was to smash in doors and windows, and plunder the houses all around in defiance of the authorities. They hid their plunder in culverts. They were the terror of the neighborhood.

"Disguised as a tramp, as a hunter, etc., I succeeded in gathering them all in. At one time five of them, by myself and unassisted."

We may say that Miller as a tramp was a great success. His make-up, his gait, his melancholy expression, his eyes—all made him appear as one of the most genuine and hardened of the entire class. All his assumed characters were well taken. He could drop his own individuality as quick as an actor on the stage, and take a new character about as well. In the work of a detective this ability was of great importance, for in shadowing the personal appearance must be changed often and quickly.

An old slouch hat and a workman's over-shirt will change a dandy into a rough-looking man in an instant, but it requires good acting on the part of the detective to appear equally well and naturally in both characters. When the "Forty Thieves" found a tramp lurking about their cave they were inclined to tolerate him for the purpose of sport, and somewhat out of sympathy for his forlorn condition. Of the hunter they were more shy, but they were not surprised to find such a person in their rural neighborhood.

But great was their astonishment when they learned that Detective Miller had investigated their cave in the character of both a tramp and a hunter. The "Sheba Queen" was terribly put out about it. In fact, the whole gang realized that they were not as sharp as they had supposed themselves to be, when they undertook to live as outlaws in the vicinity of the great city of Philadelphia.

Detective Miller continued his statement thus:

"I also arrested, in September, Dr. Buchanan, of the bogus diploma business, in Michigan. We decoyed him over from Canada, where he was giving spiritual seances.

"Dr. Buchanan and his brother-in-law, Chapman, who was also concerned with him in the diploma business, had in Sarna, Canada, while holding the spiritual seances, a telegraph-wire from the graveyard to the hall. The manner of working was as follows:

"In the hall they would ask the persons in the audience whether they had any relatives of such a name; then they would take the time of birth, death, etc., from tombstones, and telegraph them back to the hall.

"Dr. Buchanan was held for trial in the United States Court, and the night before the trial he had a man jump off the ferry-boat into the river, and throw off his coat, which proved to be Dr. Buchanan's.

"The latter part of that year there was a great trial, namely, that of Maour, select commissioner of election frauds. Mr. Maour had been a fugitive from justice and had returned, and after quite a legal battle was brought to trial, which had progressed a week, when I discovered and identified a man named Schultze, *alias* Miller, who proved to be a jury-fixer. This man was serving on the jury, and palmed himself off for the genuine Schultze.

"I arrested him and two others and, the evidence being clear, they pleaded guilty.

"The Philadelphia *Times* six weeks previous had offered a series of rewards—$1,000 for the first, $500 for the second, and $250 for the third, making a total of $1,750, which was promptly paid to me.

"There was a gang of thieves going around during the Christmas holidays, smashing windows of jewelry-stores. Among a number of others they got $4,000 worth of diamonds from one window. I arrested them, and they pleaded guilty."

Detective Miller was a native of Philadelphia and, as he often remarked, there was not a nook or corner of the place that he is not familiar with.

Post-office Inspector Louis A. Newcome will be the next subject of this series. Watch for it!

SOME SCRAPS OF PAPER

A Detective Serial

BY POLICE CAPTAIN HOWARD

CHAPTER SEVEN

NELLIE FRAZER DISAPPEARS.

FOSS had barely gone twelve feet when he heard footsteps behind him. Before he could turn around to see who it was that was coming after him, his arms were seized in a vise-like grip, and he was thrown violently to the floor. The detective struggled with all of his strength to free himself from his antagonist; but now the man was on top of him, his knees were pressing hard upon his victim's chest, and his fingers encircled the man's throat.

The detective tried hard to cry out for help, but so tight was the grasp upon his wind-pipe that he could not articulate a word. The scoundrel who had thus assailed Foss bent over him, and hissed in the detective's ear:

"Hugh Foss, I am going to kill you now, so you might as well say your prayers."

The detective struggled now with the fury of a madman, and it was as much as his enemy could do to hold him down. Tighter and tighter the man's grasp grew upon the detective's throat. The struggles of the brave man seemed fruitless.

Foss grew weaker and weaker, until at last he lost consciousness. Then the man's grasp relaxed. Then the scoundrel drew a long knife from his pocket, and with one fearful blow imbedded it in the body of the detective. The fellow arose quickly to his feet, listened a few minutes to see if the noise of the struggle had attracted any one in the house, and then giving the detective a kick, hastily left the hall, muttering:

"I have settled his hash this time, and he will never bother us again."

After leaving the tenement house the scoundrel walked to the corner, and stood for some time by the side of the lamp-post. He was a man of medium build, and wore a large sombrero, which entirely hid his face. His form was enveloped in a long black coat, and this he examined closely to see if it had any blood on it.

He was watching the tenement house, and after waiting for about half an hour, he muttered:

"I wonder who it was the cuss was talking to; it was a woman I am sure."

He waited some minutes longer, and then walked quickly away as he caught sight of a policeman.

After the accident Nellie Frazer kept her room nearly all day. She and her father resided in a handsome residence at Nob Hill, and she was the acknowledged belle of all the social gatherings in that part of the city. She was of a gay and happy disposition, and never wanted for an escort.

Peter Cole had made himself very obnoxious by his persistent calling upon Nellie, and she hated the very sight of him. Cole had the entree to good society, and he thus had the opportunity of throwing himself in Nellie's way wherever she went.

In spite of the snubs which Nellie gave Cole he still continued in his attentions. He had made up his mind to marry the girl, and he would stoop to anything to further his plans.

The scene in the lawyer's office displayed one of the means by which the scoundrel hoped to get hold of the girl; this failing, Cole saw that, now that the detective had exposed him, it would be impossible for him to call on Nellie again after that evening.

In the afternoon Nellie was sitting in her bedroom, writing a letter to a friend in the East, when the door of her room was opened suddenly, and when she turned around to see who it was she beheld Peter Cole standing in the center of the room. Upon his face there was a dark, foreboding look, and when Nellie noticed this she sprang from her chair, her whole frame trembling with apprehension, and exclaimed:

"Mr. Cole, what does this mean?"

"I wanted to see you, and I knew that if the servant announced me *your majesty* would not give me an audience."

This was said with a sneer and a low, sarcastic laugh.

Nellie recovered her composure, and in a firm voice said:

"Mr. Cole, you will please withdraw; a lady's room is not the proper place for a gentleman."

Nellie was dressed in a loose wrapper, the yoke of which was made of insertion through which her shoulders showed plainly. The wrapper set off her form to perfection, and in spite of Cole's anger he couldn't help but admire its symmetry and beauty, and this made him more desirous of becoming possessor of the treasure.

The scoundrel paid no attention to what the girl had said, but kept silent, looking intently upon her fair face.

"Mr. Cole, will you oblige me by withdrawing from this room."

This was stern and decisive, and awoke Cole from the lethargy into which he had been thrown.

"So; you are very prudish, Miss Nellie," Cole said sneeringly, as he advanced toward the girl.

Nellie noticed this action and was alive to her danger.

"Peter Cole, if you advance another step, and if you do not leave this room immediately, I shall call for the police."

She bounded forward to the side of the bureau where there was a District Messenger Call, and placed her hand upon the crank.

Cole stood still, baffled. He saw that the girl would not hesitate to carry out her threat, and he hardly knew what to do. To get her away from the instrument was the principal object.

"Nellie——"

"Miss Frazer," inerrupted Nellie.

"Well, Miss Frazer, if you will listen to what I have to say——"

"I want to hear nothing. Leave this room and the house, or I shall call the police."

"You wouldn't have me arrested?"

"I would not hesitate to do so."

"I have done nothing wrong."

"You have entered my room."

"Only to speak to you."

"I would not have seen you if you had been announced."

"May I ask why?"

"Because I dislike you."

"Why do you dislike me?"

"I can't answer you. I dislike you, and that is enough."

"I wanted to ask you something when I came here, and to tell you something that will compel you to like me, and do as I say."

"I have heard enough, Mr. Cole! Leave this room. I will give you three minutes to get out."

"Well, then, your father is a forger, and will be arrested to-morrow!"

"What?"

Nellie started, turned pale and allowed her hand to drop from the box. This was just what the scoundrel wanted. His assertion was false, as my readers know, and was only said to frighten the girl, and get her to take her hand from the instrument.

No sooner had Nellie started back than Cole bounded forward and placed himself between the instrument and the girl, who was now in his power. He stood glaring at Nellie, who was now trembling with fear; and, with a smile upon his face, he said:

"Are you going to listen to me now?"

Nellie remained silent, thinking of what she should do and say.

"What I have told you is the truth, and I am the only one who can save your father from disgrace. I propose to do this if you do as I say and consent to marry me immediately."

Now it flashed upon the helpless girl that what Cole had said was not the truth, and that he had only told her this to frighten her into marrying him. All her fear fled now, and she commenced to think of what she should do to thwart the scoundrel. She thought that Cole would not dare to hurt her, but she did not know the man she had to deal with.

She thought that she might be able to do something which would frighten Cole and compel him to leave the house. Her room faced the street, and, as she turned her head around, she saw that the windows were open.

She knew that people were passing up and down the street, and if she called out for help, some one would hear her and come to her aid.

Without saying another word to Cole, she turned around suddenly and bounded towards the window. The scoundrel saw what she intended to do, and before she could reach the window, he grasped her around the waist, clapped his hand over her mouth, so that she could not cry out, and dragged her back into the room and hissed into her ear:

"Not so fast, Miss Nellie. You thought that you would get ahead of me that time, but, you see, I am just as smart as you are!"

Nellie struggled hard to free herself from the scoundrel's grasp, but her struggles were in vain, for he was strong while she was weak.

For a minute Cole took his hand off the brave girl's mouth. She gasped at first, and then she cried out, at the top of her voice:

"Help! help! h——"

The hand was put over her mouth again, and with a curse, Cole exclaimed:

"If you do that again I will strangle you to death!"

He stopped and listened to see if her cries had attracted any attention, but no one heard her, and the house was quiet. Assuring himself that no one was around, Cole said, as he held Nellie down on the bed:

"Unless you do as I say I will kill you."

He drew a murderous-looking knife from his pocket, and flashed it before her eyes. The girl looked into Cole's face, and saw that he would carry out his threat, now that he was so furious with rage.

"Oh, that some one would come to my aid! Father in Heaven, protect me from this villain!" murmured Nellie, as soon as Cole took his hand from her mouth and clutched her throat with his fingers, while his disengaged hand still held the knife.

"Are you going to do as I suggest?"

Nellie remained silent, and did not answer the question. She found herself growing weak, and that her senses were leaving her. If she fainted, what would Cole do?

This thought horrified her, and a thrill of pain passed through her heart. What should she do? Should she pretend to yield? Should she tell this fiend in human shape that she would do anything he said? If she could only engage him in conversation and gain time, perhaps some one would come to her rescue. The suspense was fearful, and the longer she remained silent, the more furious Cole was becoming.

"What are you going to do?" Cole demanded again. "Unless you answer me I will choke the whole breath out of your body."

He tightened his grasp on the girl's throat to show her that he was in earnest.

"What do you want me to do?" Nellie gasped.

"You know well enough. I want you to become my wife."

"Give me time to think."

"Not an hour. You must consent or I will choke you immediately."

"If I consent what will you want me to do."

"Go to a minister with me immediately, and we will be married."

"Without telling my father?"

"Yes; it is not necessary."

"Why not?"

"Don't question me any longer. Either consent or say that you will not obey me."

This was said in a cold, harsh tone, and the scoundrel again tightened his grasp upon Nellie's throat as a gentle reminder of what he would do. The poor girl was frantic, and prayed earnestly to be delivered from this danger. But it seemed as if her prayers were not listened to and she was doomed to suffer.

"Will you consent?"

New strength seemed to be given to the brave girl, and she answered:

"I will not."

Cole did not expect this. He thought that he had frightened Nellie sufficiently for her to do almost anything he ordered. He ground his teeth and swore fearfully. Then raising the knife in the air as if he was about to bury it in the girl's heart, he exclaimed:

"Are you going to consent?"

"Not if you kill me!"

(To be continued.)

CURRENT NEWS

YOUNG GRANDMOTHER

The youngest grandmother in history resides in Wilmington, Del., according to the State Health Department, whose record shows that a negress of this city is a grandmother at the age of twenty-seven years. The State authorities refused to divulge the name of the woman, but said that the records show that the present grandmother at the age of fourteen years gave birth to a daughter, and several days ago this girl, now thirteen years old, had a baby girl born to her.

SEEKING HUSBAND

Mrs. Catherine Morris McCarter, of Chicago, searched for eighteen years for her husband, then found him living in the same apartment building in which she resided.

Mrs. Carter recently moved into a north side apartment building. After living in the building for two weeks she happened to glance at the names on the letter boxes in the hallway and saw one bearing the name of W. W. McCarter.

She investigated and learned that W. W. McCarter was her husband, who, she charges, deserted her. McCarter was arrested charged with non-support.

THE HAND TREE

A curious tree is growing in Los Angeles, Cal., the seed of which was brought from Mexico. In general appearance it resembles an English walnut. The leaves are much like those of a buttonwood, but very much larger. The most marked peculiarity of the tree is its blossoms, from which it has been named the "hand tree." The flower is an inch and a half in diameter, with short russet sepals and long, reddish lined petals. The fat scarlet pistils protrude an inch beyond. They are so joined as to resemble a hand, with fingernails like the claws of a Chinese grandee. The resemblance to a hand is striking.

THIRTEEN'S PREDOMINANCE

Hogan Beaty, who is No. 13 in his company, Co. H., 141st Infantry, sent in the following showing how No. 13 has figured in the history of the regiment in France. The regiment sailed for France on July 13 and landed thirteen days after leaving New York. They sailed on the Finland on its thirteenth voyage for the government, and it was rated at 13 knots per hour. On August 13 they arrived at training area No. 13, leaving there on Friday, September 13, one month and thirteen days after entering. On October 13 they advanced thirteen miles and the thirteenth officer was killed on the evening they were believed at the front.

GOLD MINING AT CONEY ISLAND

Of the many varied and extraordinary sights at Coney Island, New York, none is more surprising than to find men digging in the sand of the beach for gold and precious stones. Some of them make a regular business of it, wearing hip boots like placer miners of the '49's, and armed with shovels and sieves. On good days the "dirt" has paid as high as $30. This search for gold differs from mining in the west or elsewhere, however, in that rings, chains, stick-pins, lockets, etc., are recovered. What the patient men dig up is, of course, the jewelry which careless bathers who frequent the beach by the tens of thousands have lost. No doubt the original owners of these treasured articles have assumed that their recovery was absolutely out of the question.

LOST $600 IN OLD SWINDLE

Mrs. Julia Spink told in Police Court in Peekskill, N. Y., the other day that it cost her $600, her life's savings, to receive a demonstration of how to make money.

Benjamin Hermans was arraigned on a charge of having been implicated in swindling her. He was remanded for a further hearing.

Mrs. Spinks, who lives in Buchanan, N. Y., became interested in two strangers, whom Hermans introduced, in a machine they said would turn out money. After one revolution a new crisp two-dollar bill came out of the slot. Just to satisfy her it was genuine currency they told her to run out to the store and buy something. When she got back the money-makers and the money-making machine had disappeared. So had $600 in cash she had put in a drawer.

BROUGHT BACK TO LIFE

To be pronounced dead from influenza and laid out with a string of corpses ready for the morgue and then to be brought back to life was the uncanny experience of Martin Taylor, of Unit No. 305 of the Ambulance Corps at Camp Jessup, Fort MacPherson, Ga. Such information is contained in a letter from the "dead" man to his brother, Cleo S. Taylor, of Long Beach, Cal. The soldier said that four men died by his side just before he was given up for dead and was taken to the death ward to await the arrival of the "wagon." One of the hospital attendants, preparing the body for the last rites, discovered a trace of warmth in his feet. Every means known to medical science was invoked, with the result that young Taylor is now pronounced practically well, after having suffered from the dread malady for four weeks and been given up for dead.

FIND INDIAN SKELETONS

While excavating for a basement near the river bank, Oregon City, Ore., men employed by Frank Busch have uncovered twenty skeletons of Indians in one hole. The bodies are supposed to be the remains of Indians killed in battle, for in one or two cases arrow-heads have been found caught between the bones. The first trace of the bones was found early in the week when the workmen uncovered a skull. It was buried by itself and Mr. Busch, who has studied the find carefully, believes that it belonged to a chief or leader. To prevent disturbing the bones, the workmen began excavating in another place and they found a hole with a radius of about six feet, which Mr. Busch estimates contains the bones of at least twenty Indians. The skeletons are lying like the spokes of a wheel, with the skulls in the center. Over the top of the grave was a thick, hard crust of baked clay that was hardened like stone.

MAN LIVED ON CORN

Several weeks ago a complaint was filed in the Probate Court at Burlington, Kans., alleging that E. A. Whitley was feeble-minded and asking that a guardian be appointed. This was done. The guardian held a public sale to dispose of the personal property of the estate, which consisted largely of several hundred bushels of corn which had been cribbed from eight to eleven years. It was fine grain when it was cribbed, but the rats and weevil had worked on it. It was sold at a big discount. This corn had been Whitley's principal article of diet for a number of years. He lived alone and would grind the corn in an old coffee mill and make mush of it. He said there was no food with as much nourishment. He insisted that the "planets" predicted there would be no more crops for years. He wanted to keep this grain.

MAKING A NEW FACE

Winnipeg hospital physicians are making a new face for nine-year-old Edgar Forbes of Rathwell, Manitoba. The boy's face was reduced to pulp when he was run over by a sleigh. Every bone was broken. The experiment will be a success, according to the physicians. The bones were reset and will mould, they say. Four dentists, after days of experimenting in the hospital laboratory, completed an artificial palate for his mouth. When the boy was brought to the hospital his face was unrecognizable. Every bone was sunk in. Both eyes were sunken. The bridge bones of his nose were smashed in many pieces and after an X-ray examination were found lodged in his throat. The boy will be able to see again, although at present he is blind in one eye and scarcely able to distinguish objects with the other. The eyeballs were not injured.

CURIOSITY CAUSES FIRE

Inquisitiveness on the part of an employee of the Grand Trunk Railway Company at Ottawa, Canada, who applied a match to a pool of coal oil "to see if it would burn," was responsible for the conflagration which wiped out the freight sheds, offices and twenty-eight loaded and unloaded cars of the company, with a total loss of $112,000. Henry Daoust, a freight handler, who appeared at the investigation proceedings with his face badly burned and one of his hands swathed in bandages, frankly told how he had come to start the blaze. He said he had noticed a pool of liquid on the floor of the freight shed close to a number of barrels which had been shipped in from the Inland Revenue Department. He did not know what the liquid was, but was curious to see whether it would burn. He applied a match, with the result that the liquid burst into a blue flame. Almost immediately an explosion occurred which hurled him backward.

GETS BACK TOWEL

A person stopped at the Cosmopolitan Hotel, in New Orleans, La., eight years ago for a couple of days. Of course there are scores of folks stop at the Cosmopolitan every day, but this particular man was there eight years ago.

When he was packing up to leave, he pitched one of the hotel's towels into his grip. It was a common hotel face towel with the usual red border. The hotel clerk certainly didn't know that the man took the towel, or there would have been an extra 11 cents added to his bill.

Nothing more was heard of the man—or the towel—until recently. Manager James Lynch received a package mailed from San Francisco. Inside the package was a towel—the same towel that the man took from the hotel room eight years ago, and pinned to the towel was the following note:

"I took this towel eight years ago, thinking it was cute, but found it was sin. So will return it, as I am living a much better life to-day." There was no signature.

EARTH EATING

The Loas of Siam eat earth and enjoy it, just as the German drinks beer, the Frenchman wine and the Englishman his ale. No one knows exactly where they contracted the habit. Perhaps during some time of great famine when there was nothing to devour. At any rate, the habit is strong, and rich and poor alike indulge. They prefer it when it is procured near waters, so that it has the taste of fish. It is prepared into a pasty substance and smothered in the ground in a hot fire. It is sold in the markets and stores and is served at dinners and big functions of all kinds. Of course, it is dreadfully hard on the digestion and in time produces intense pain and death follows. But, like the opium eater, the dirt eater will beg for his food even at death's door. In some parts of the Kongo the dirt is sold in the shape of apples and oranges and all kinds are given out—yellow dirt, brown dirt, gray earth and pinkish varieties, too, which is considered a great luxury indeed.

SLEEPS FOR 47 DAYS AND NIGHTS

After sleeping forty-seven days—and nights—Matilda Blount, colored, who "sleeps" at No. 1018 West Thirty-seventh street, Savannah, Ga., has awakened from her extended slumbers, very much alive and with a number of miraculous tales to tell.

Matilda went to sleep forty-seven days ago and during her peaceful rest baffled Savannah physicians by giving them a fair example of sound slumber.

The negress is now baffling her many listeners, telling them what she saw while in a state of subconsciousness. St. Peter and she are on speaking acquaintance, and the great white way is no longer a mystery to her. She does not offer any explanation of the darker regions, but has made the heavenly sphere as clear to Savannah's darktown as Pittsburg.

The negress was a peculiar case. She could be stood on her head, placed in any position, stuck with a knife, pinched or kicked, while asleep and it would never disturb her. She was fed artificially, and had a trained nurse attendant to study the case.

A CHANCE DISCOVERY

The romance of rustless steel, one of the most recent metallurgical triumphs, is given increased prominence with the removal of control, says the Scientific American. The new metal, with a bright surface and able to resist the corroding effect of air, water and acids without staining, was discovered just prior to the outbreak of the war, and was immediately commandeered by the British Government for use in airplane construction and for purposes where strength and durability combined with rust-resisting qualities were invaluable.

The steel is a Sheffield invention, and was chanced upon largely by accident. A local metallurgist, Harry Brearly, author of numerous standard works, was experimenting in the armament shop to find a means of preventing erosion in gun tubes. After some of his experiments he noticed that certain pieces of chrome steel had not suffered from corrosive influences under conditions which would have rusted ordinary steel. He followed up this clue, and what is known as stainless steel was eventually worked out and added to Sheffield's metallurgical triumphs.

ENGLAND'S FIRST CHRISTIAN KING

The first Christian King of England was St. Ethelbert, King of Kent. Ethelbert reigned over Kent from 560 to 616, and he also held imperial sway over the other Saxon monarch as far north as the banks of the Humber. Like all his predecessors on English thrones he was a pagan. To increase his power he married Bertha, daughter of the King of Paris. His Queen was a Christian, and she brought with her to England a French bishop, who held services for the benefit of Bertha and her attendants in a small building near Canterbury. King Ethelbert was not very favorably impressed with his wife's new-fangled religion and preferred that of his fathers until an Italian missionary, St. Augustine, arrived in England. The King and his stalwart pagan warriors gave a hearty greeting to the missionary, and Augustine soon convinced the Kentish King that Christianity was an improvement over the old faith. Ethelbert was duly baptized, and the lesser chiefs and common people soon followed his example. So great was the eagerness of the people to embrace the religion of Christ that on one day 10,000 people were baptized.

SOUNDS IN SEA SHELLS

The sounds we hear in the sea shell are really air waves or sounds made by air waves, because all sounds are produced by air waves.

The reason you can hear these sounds in a sea shell is because the shell is so constructed that it forms a natural sounding box. The wooden part of a guitar, zither or violin is a sounding box. They have the faculty of picking up sounds and making them stronger. We call them "resonators," because they make sounds resound. The construction of a sea shell makes an almost perfect resonator, says the Book of Wonders. A perfect resonator will pick up sounds which the human ear cannot hear at all and magnify them so that if you hold a resonator to the ear you can hear sounds you could not otherwise hear. Ear trumpets for the deaf are built upon this principle.

Sometimes when you, with your ear alone, think something is absolutely quiet, you can pick up a sea shell and hear sounds in it. But the sea shell will magnify any sound that reaches it.

It would be possible, of course, to take a sea shell to a place where it would be absolutely quiet and then there would be no sounds.

There are such places, but very few of them. A room can be built which is absolutely sound proof.

PEAT BOG IN NEW YORK CITY

Although most New Yorkers are ignorant of the fact, there is a large deposit of good peat within the city limits which might be used locally as fuel. This bog—probably the world's most accessible peat supply, since there are several million people within twenty-five miles of it—is known as Juniper Swamp, and is located in the western part of Long Island, in the Borough of Queens, between Maspeth and Middle Village. The bog covers an area of about one hundred acres and the peat bed is from ten to fifteen feet thick. The peat is reddish-brown, pretty thoroughly decomposed a few feet below the surface, and seems to be of excellent quality. It constitutes 42,000,000 cubic feet of easily accessible material, which merely needs cutting out and drying to provide good fuel for thousands of families, according to authorities of the Museum of Natural History.

The bog lay unnoticed for nearly three-quarters of a century, until in 1916 contractors building a freight connection between the New Haven and Long Island Railroads located their line across the middle of it, and have since completed a cut through the bog in such a way that the bog-water is being rapidly drained off. The peat which remains will therefore soon dry out, and will then be in danger of catching fire from an engine spark and being entirely wasted.

Peat is disintegrated and partially decomposed vegetable matter—vegetable mud. It collects in and fills up swamps under favorable conditions. Vast deposits of it are known in temperate and cold climates. It is not found in warm localities, for there the decay of vegetable matter is too rapid. The formation of peat illustrates the condition under which coal originates. The rate of growth of peat bog is often from one to four inches a year, the depth varying from ten to twenty feet.

When dried in the open air peat forms a valuable domestic fuel, and its value is greatly enhanced by compression into small blocks or briquettes, whether alone or in mixture with coal dust. In times and countries where the forests could not supply sufficient fuel men have turned to peat to take the place of wood for burning. Its greatest importance seems to have been in the eighteenth century, when the forests of Northern Europe had been to a great extent cleared away and the use of coal had not yet become general.

A VANISHED TOWN

Because he was angered at himself for his poor judgment in laying in a stock of goods just at the time, forty years ago, that the town of Lowell, Neb., was about to vanish into thin air, its owner closed its doors, shutting the stock inside, and has never since opened them.

Lowell is in Kearney County, 140 miles west of Lincoln. A representative of the State Historical Society, stopping there the other day for some data about the town, which was once the largest city in Southern Nebraska, but is now populated by less than thirty persons, got a glimpse of the store's interior. Its present owner, Mr. Breen, to whom it has descended by inheritance and who keeps it intact because of its historic interest, allowed him a glimpse inside.

The store itself has every window boarded up, the floor is rickety and shaky and everything inside is covered with the dust and cobwebs of forty years. On the shelves, however, were found ginghams, the prints still clear-cut and gleaming, and in the drawers and on racks were plaid shawls, coats, sidelaced shoes, hair nets, bustles and other articles of wear. Piled on the high shelves were china, earthenware, some jars with candy still in them. In dusty showcases were old bits of jewelry and ancient notions.

The vanished city of Lowell numbered 6,000 inhabitants. That was in the early seventies. It was the end of the railroad, a typical frontier town of those days. It boasted four hotels, was the county seat, eight or ten big stores, on the top of one of which was a tower in which a huge lantern swung every night, a veritable beacon for the freighters. "Kit Carson," "Buffalo Bill" and "Wild Bill" were familiar figures. It had its dance halls and its gambling hells, and hundreds of graves are still discernible on the nearby hillside, where the victims of shooting affrays were buried.

The big stores were kept so busy that they had day and night shifts of clerks, and $15,000 for an evening's business was not uncommon. A bridge over the Platte and the extension of the railroad took the trade elsewhere, and within a few months the city almost vanished.

Most of the owners of stores moved their stocks, but most of the buildings were left to go to pieces. Many of these ruins yet remain.

ANCIENT SHIP WONDER

An ancient Syracusan ship—a Greek Mauretania—that carried vast cargoes and had a gymnasium, bath, lounge and gardens aboard, was described by Prof. W. S. Ferguson of Harvard in a lecture in Boston, Mass., on Greek economic development.

Prof. Ferguson gave a minute description of the great ship, the wonder of its time. He said it was of the three-deck type, with twenty banks of oars, that required one whole year in building and which was manned by a crew of 300 sailors, together with 600 marines. In its hold it could carry 110,000 bushels of wheat, wool, thousands of jars of salt fish and other foodstuffs. Its cabins were decorated with elaborate mosaics, one set of them picturing all of the Iliad. Its chambers included a gymnasium, a lounge with a "book shelf," a bath provided with fifty gallons of water, stalls for horses, "gardens" or conservatories, and, in addition to all these luxuries and necessities, it had equipment and engines of defense which gave it the character almost of a ship of war. In such achievements as these, the ship having been built at a time when economic decay had begun to beset Greece, Prof. Ferguson said he could not avoid the conclusion that theories of Greek infantility in economic development found little support.

SUBSTITUTES IN GERMAN MILITARY GOODS

An examination of the huge mass of military material abandoned by the German Third Army in the region of Coblenz shows the straits to which the Germans were reduced by the shortage of leather and cotton.

In every case where it was possible a substitute was utilized in the manufacture of war material. For that reason much of the supplies abandoned will be of little use to the American Army. Whenever practicable, paper was used instead of cloth or leather.

One warehouse contains thousands of bags made of a rough paper cloth for use as sandbags in the construction of trenches and defense systems. According to military men, these bags would weather only a few weeks and are probably not worth the shipping space.

Another storehouse was packed with horse equipment, most of it manufactured from paper cloth. The American salvage officers discovered in this warehouse a new wrinkle in the use of paper. There were hundreds of sets of harness for horses made of paper fabric reinforced with thin steel cables; also halters, bridles and saddle bags. Salvage men believe that for the rough usage of war this harness is as good as leather harness, inasmuch as it is replaceable cheaply, and in case an animal is killed on the battlefield the loss is less. In the same storehouse were thousands of horse blankets of paper, which are probably as warm as a cotton or wool blanket. Other finds were hundreds of coils of rope and cord of twisted paper strips, which are of little use because they quickly fray and pull apart after wetting.

Among the abandoned material were several thousand thick straw horse shoes. The use of these shoes is puzzling military men, but it is believed they were used to muffle the tread of horses hauling artillery near the front. The Germans even used paper for the covering of stretchers for wounded.

Also there were great quantities of bolts of paper fabric for use in making the uppers of shoes. The fabric resembles a heavy black canvas with a shiny finish. Upon casual inspection it is difficult to determine that the material is not a thick shiny canvas, except that it is less pliable than cotton fabric.

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This is STAGE MONEY

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Acid-Stomach Makes Millions Suffer

Indigestion—dyspepsia—sour stomachs—bloated, gassy stomachs—belchy, miserable-feeling stomachs—these are Acid-Stomachs.

What a lot of misery they cause! How Acid-Stomach, with its day-after-day sufferings, does take the joy out of life! Not only that — Acid-Stomach is always undermining one's health. Think of what acid does to the teeth—how the acid eats through the enamel, causing them to decay. Is it any wonder, then, that Acid-Stomach saps the strength of the strongest bodies and wrecks the health of so many people?

You see ACID-STOMACH victims everywhere **always** ailing. They can't tell exactly what is the matter; all they say is, "I don't feel well"—"I'm all in; tired, sickly." If they only knew it, nine times out of ten it is Acid-Stomach that is ailing them. It surely makes good digestion difficult, causes food to sour and ferment in the bowels, weakens the blood and fills the system with poisons. It prevents one from getting the full strength out of their food.

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EATONIC is in the form of tablets—tastes like a bit of candy. Absolutely harmless and agrees with the most delicate stomach. Try it. Get a big box of EATONIC from your druggist today. The cost is trifling. If it fails to bring wonderful relief, take it back; he will refund your money.

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FOR YOUR ACID-STOMACH

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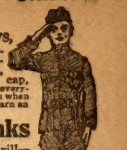

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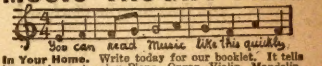

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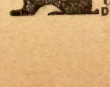

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